Tamil TIMES

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"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."

– Voltaire

★ First Woman Chief Minister

Chandrika Bandaranaike-Kumaranatunge

★ Assassination Probe

★ P.C. Elections – Crisis Over Appointment of Chief Ministers

★ Indiscriminate Arrest of Tamils in Sri Lanka

★ Whither the Tamil Question After Premadasa?

★ The Second Coming of India?

★ Revelations by Israeli Agent

★ What Went Wrong Between Premadasa and Tamil Tigers

★ Delhi-Madras Rift Widens

★ Referendum in the East

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CONTENTS

SLFP changes tack on PCs. 4
Indiscriminate arrest of Tamils in Colombo. 5
Thondaman defends Presidential system. 6
Provincial Council elections. 7
Premadasa assassination probe. 10
Whither the Tamil question?. 11

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CONTENTS

India's second coming? 13
What went wrong between the Tigers and Premadasa. 16
Revelations of an Israeli agent 17
The Sub-Continental scene. 21
Opposition move to abolish Executive Presidency. 24
Readers Forum. 25

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AN EXERCISE IN GRAVE PROVOCATION

The Parliamentary Select Committee on the ethnic question chaired by Mr. Mangala Moonesinghe, MP, met on 10 June after a lapse of several months and is reported to have made a surprise decision to recommend the holding of a referendum in four months time in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka to enable the people of the province to decide on the question whether it should remain merged as at present with the Northern Province as a single Province. The decision has been supported by the ruling United National Party and the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

None of the parties representing the Tamil speaking people – including the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and the Ceylon Workers Congress – were parties to this decision. In fact all these parties, except the SLMC, had announced their boycott of the proceedings of the PSC last December expressing dissatisfaction with the way in which the PSC was reaching its decisions without even having considered the proposals put forward by these parties.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987 followed by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution and the Provincial Councils Act were expected to form the basis of a resolution of the ethnic conflict which had been continuing for decades. A Provincial Council comprising the Northern and Eastern Provinces was established subject to a referendum to be held in the Eastern Province for the people to decide whether they wished to remain merged with Northern Province.

Under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, the pre-requisite for holding the proposed referendum was that it should be held after one year of the Provincial Council functioning. However, the Northeastern Provincial Council was not allowed to function by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who opposed the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement describing it as a 'charter of servility'. President Premadasa who assumed office after the Northeastern Provincial council came into being set about undermining it and ensured that it did not function. He too had opposed the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Both Mr. Premadasa and the LTTE commenced negotiations, ensured the departure of the IPKF and the Provincial Council too was dissolved at the behest of the LTTE which argued that those elected to it lacked legitimacy. The negotiations lasted 14 months, but war broke out in June 1990 between the Tigers and government forces which continues to this day.

Another basic precondition for holding the contemplated referendum was:

> *'All persons who have been displaced due to ethnic violence, or other reasons, will have the right to vote in such a referendum. Necessary conditions to enable them to return to areas from where they were displaced will be created'. (Clause 2.4, Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement).*

The war that broke out in June 1990 which still continues has displaced over 300,000 people from the Eastern Province. Tens of thousands have fled out of the Province to other areas. The overwhelming majority of the displaced people are Tamils and Muslims. Sinhalese people who had lived in the east for generations too have been displaced. According to Amnesty International, an estimated 3,000 persons have 'disappeared'.

Thus the two basic requirements needed for the envisaged referendum are absent. On the contrary, military operations and almost daily battles between government forces and the Tigers are continuing on an ongoing basis. In this context, recent statements attributed to the military high command sound ominous. The 'Sunday Island' (13.6.93), quoting General Officer Commanding the East, Maj. Gen. Lucky Algama, reported that the military high command had assured the Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee that the armed forces had the strength and capacity to drive out the Tigers from the entire Eastern Province within four months to pave the way for the holding of the referendum, and that they had expressed confidence in completing the job even within three months. If these reports are correct what is being planned is a massive military operation and the LTTE is unlikely to be prepared to be driven out without a fight. This will inevitably result in further death, destruction and displacement of people.

Even in the context of the unlikely prospect of the armed forces succeeding in 'cleaning out' the east of Tigers, the resulting situation would hardly be conducive to holding a referendum in which the people who still remain in the east will act as free agents in casting their votes. They will be captives in a highly militarised situation with a massive presence of the security forces. They also will have in their minds the possible retaliatory action by the Tigers who no doubt will seek to undermine and disrupt the referendum being held.

Without commenting on the merits or otherwise of the principle of the need to hold a referendum to ascertain the views of the people of the east on the question of Northeast merger, what can be said is that a referendum held in these circumstances would be deeply flawed. It will neither be credible nor valid to be taken seriously as a final and binding decision upon any party. It will not end the conflict and it will not bring the much desired peace. On the other hand, it would further raise tensions, create divisions and even produce violent clashes among the communities living in the east. It is an exercise in grave provocation. The PSC which was appointed to find ways and means of solving the ethnic conflict, by its reported decision if implemented, would succeed only in aggravating the conflict making future efforts at resolution more difficult.

SLFP Changes Tack on Provincial Councils

from Rita Sebastian in Colombo

The controversial Provincial Councils system, boycotted by the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party when it was first held in 1988, seems to have got a new lease of life second time around with the appointment of Chandrika Kumaranatunge as Chief Minister for the western province.

Chandrika, ready to wrest as much provincial autonomy as provided for in the 13th amendment has revived interest in the system, for the earlier Councils were seen as no more than an extension of the government at the centre.

The councils were the main provision of the much maligned Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, meant to appease the Tamil demand for a separate homeland in the northeast. Today unfortunately the main beneficiary, the people in the northeast have been denied provincial autonomy, in the face of a continuing 'war'.

The 1988 created Provincial Council in the temporarily merged northeast province unfortunately had a rather short life. It could hardly have survived, considering the fact that it was created through a much flawed electoral process. It was a very cleverly manipulated exercise where elections were not held in the north and candidates elected uncontested, and elections in the east held under questionable circumstances, with hundreds of Indian soldiers providing the necessary 'cover'.

Elections this time however have a legitimacy that the earlier elections lacked. There is no controversy on the elections having been 'fair and free'.

Although the UNP emerged as the single most powerful party, having secured the largest percentage of votes, it suffered a major setback by losing the populous and wealthiest western province to the SLFP-led people's Alliance.

Inspite of Mrs. Bandaranaike making the categorical statement, during the election campaign, that she would scrap the provincial councils system when she is returned to power, the SLFP has undergone a sea-change since the election results were announced.

Having won the western province and jointly secured a majority in the northwestern and southern councils with the Democratic United National Front (DUNF), it seems to be quite enamoured with the system it denounced.

It has begun to realise that by boycotting the first provincial poll it had excluded itself from regional politics, and lost out on regional mobilisation that the councils presented.

With a highly intelligent and educated leadership at the provincial level the provincial administrations are sure going to exercise the maximum powers devolved under the 13th amendment.

During the life of the earlier councils the centre used powers in the concurrent list to erode the authority of the councils. The centre also imposed itself on the political structure of the province wherever it felt that the province was asserting too much independence.

Thus the earlier councils were not able to have a meaningful impact on the life of ordinary people due to the reluctance of the centre to devolve power with regard to land, education, agrarian services and transport.

Under the Provincial Councils Act, the provincial police force is under the Chief Minister. In many respects devolved powers relating to law and order is equivalent to those powers enjoyed by the States in India.

The arrangements however have never been implemented.

The question however remains whether the centre with a new leadership at the helm will share power sincerely and honestly with the opposition in the south.

Although during the election campaign President Dingiri Banda Wijetunge did say that 'The spoon is in my hand. I am the Finance Minister and it is I who will allocate funds for expenditure. I won't vote money for the opposition to insult, abuse, castigate and character assassinate others and create dissension and disunity in the country', it was seen more as election rhetoric rather than a threat to deprive councils of their powers.

Besides, with Wijetunge seen more as a benevolent leader, ready to compromise with the opposition it is unlikely that the councils, once they start functioning, will come up against an obstructionist centre.

The successful working of the councils in the south could help the case of the northeast council, once the contentious issue of the merger of the two provinces has been settled, the war in the northeast is brought to an end, and elections are held in the province and the political process gets off the ground.

First Woman Chief Minister

by Rita Sebastian

She is into the 'family business'. There was father, S.W.R.D., mother Sirima and brother Anura before her. But Chandrika, the second of the three Bandaranaike offspring is not an unwilling 'captive' although she tells you 'I would get out of politics if given half the chance. But now I can't. I got caught by the tail and people would skin me alive if I did.'

She is however honest enough to admit that she enjoys the challenge because 'I like to see a job well done. I like managing things'.

On Friday Chandrika Bandaranaike-Kumaranatunge was sworn in as the island's first woman Provincial Chief Minister for the populous western province, that covers almost one third of the electorate.

Three weeks of intense campaigning, an average of addressing 50 meetings a day a non-stop 20-hour working schedule, and reaching a stage when she was 'tired of hearing her own voice' still kept her going. 'I had set myself a goal and there was no turning back'.

And the goal she achieved by getting a massive 300,000 preference votes, the largest ever in the island. 'I had worked it out to about 350,000 on the basis of an 80 percent poll. But for some reason the poll averaged 70%. Being an economist I sat down and statistically calculated it.'

For Chandrika getting into the 'family business' has been traumatic. In 1959 she was a teenager when her father, Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was assassinated by a Buddhist monk. In 1988, she saw her actor-politician husband Vijaya Kumaratunga murdered, allegedly by the left-wing radicals, the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP).

Shortly after Vijaya's killing, Chandrika left for London. She left behind

the party, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya (SLMP), which she and her husband jointly founded. When she came back the party had disintegrated. And Chandrika was back in the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) fold.

She agonises over the breaking up of the SLMP. 'I used to say I had three children, the party was the first. I sacrificed everything for it, friends and relations, and I was let down by the party. It had come to a point where it was like a gangrenous limb which you couldn't help but amputate.'

But Chandrika has put aside the regrets. Today she is all set to run the western provincial administration.

Her first priority she says is to have a 'clean, non-corrupt and efficient administration. Efficiency seems to be the last thing in our part of the world.

'I am determined' she says 'that there will be no interference with officials. They must be able to work in an atmosphere of freeedom without fearing political reprisals. It does not matter what party they belong to.'

Another of the Chief Minister's priorities is to see that national production increases. 'I am not ashamed to say that I was once a believer in the socialist economy but now accept that it has failed. But I still believe in socialist principles, like humanity, justice and fairplay for all.

Chandrika is scathing in her attack on the government's liberalisation policy and free market economy.

'There has to be some form of liberalisation, but not in the way the government has executed it. It is not even a capitalist economy. Whatever isms you believe in the country can develop itself only if the national production increases. We have, consciously or unconsciously, let our national production drop. We must therefore first address ourselves to that. The national must be given priority over the foreign.'

We return to the subject of the family business. Does she consider herself the natural heir to the Bandaranaike political legacy. 'I don't believe in that kind of rubbish. Even today if there is someone who can take over from my mother, who is not a Bandaranaike, I tell you I will be the happiest person. I am prepared to serve under that person.'

Chandrika doesn't mince words about the quality of today's politician. 'In Sri Lanka most of the people who come into politics today are the scum of our society. The good people have been frightened away. And for this former President J.R. Jayewardene is solely responsible. He created such an unsavoury atmosphere in politics. Drug dealers and Kassipu kings were encouraged into politics by him. Added to it came the gun culture.' Premadasa who came after Jayewardene continued the cycle says Chandrika.

The many faceted Chandrika, she paints, 'loves reading' used to play several musical instruments, writes poetry, is engaged in serious research, finds single parenting 'difficult sometimes' but manages all the same.

She spends most evenings with her two young children, daughter Yasodhra 13 and son Vimukti 11, and one day at the weekend is entirely devoted to them.

Are we seeing a Presidential candidate in the making? She laughs off the question. For her there are more important things to think of at the moment.

Indiscriminate Arrest of Tamils in Colombo

In the wake of the assassinations of President Premadasa and Lalith Athulathmudali and reports of alleged Tiger infiltration into Colombo, over 700 Tamil youth, men and women, have been rounded up in the city and its suburbs. Police seem to justify these indiscriminate arrests on the basis of the alleged involvement of the Tigers in both the assassinations, although the LTTE had denied responsibility. Colombo newspapers are replete with reports, quoting police sources, that 'Tiger squads' are already in the city to attack important personalities and installations.

Special police teams from all police stations in Colombo have been undertaking midnight and dawn raids of lodges, flats, apartments and hotels everywhere and taking Tamil youth into custody on mere suspicion or on the ground that they have no 'valid reason' to be in Colombo. Tamil youth are even being picked up as they walk along the streets. Thousands of Tamils from the north and east of the island fled to the south since the war broke out between government forces and Tamil Tigers in June 1990 to escape the horrors of the continuing war. Another reason for many young Tamils, both men and women, to be in Colombo is for making arrangements to go abroad in search of employment or security. A new aspect of this campaign of arrests is that even older Tamils, including members of the employed middle classes who had been residing in Colombo for years are being taken into custody. There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority taken into custody in this indiscriminate round up are innocent of any crime. The capture and removal of persons, especially women and young girls, by police particularly during nights have placed the entire Tamil people residing in the south in a state of utter fear. Tamil Members of Parliament have protested to the President about these indiscriminate arrests and raised the matter in parliament.

'If the government does not want the Tamil people to live in the south, and if the government says that Tamils of the north and east cannot escape from the stranglehold of the Tigers and go to the south of the island to reside at least temporarily, let the government openly say so. If you genuinely wish that the Sinhalese and Tamils should live in one united country, then you should learn to treat the Tamil people with equality', EPRLF leader Suresh Premachandran told parliament recently.

'The arrests that have taken place recently on the pretext of investigating the possibility of LTTE attacks in Colombo have gone beyond the limits of humanitarian and democratic norms. Every day hundreds of Tamils particularly young men and women are being taken into custody while at home or when they are proceeding to or returning from work. Those arrested include teachers, nurses and others who have been engaged in employment for years, university students and those waiting to go abroad. Those who are arrested and not released are being detained at Welikade prison without any evidence whatsoever to support such detention. When Tigers are allowed to infiltrate into the private residence of the most powerful person in the land, and while "peace missions" are being permitted to make pilgrimages to the Tiger leadership in Jaffna, innocent and defenceless Tamils are being harassed and ill-treated in Colombo. Under the pretext of hunting the Tigers, the police are hunting innocent sheep,' Mr. Premachandaran added.

State Minister and the Secretary to the Ceylon Workers Congress, Mr. M.S. Sellasamy met President Wijetunga to explain the state of fear that has gripped the entire Tamil community in Colombo and adjoining areas following recent indiscriminate arrests. He suggested to the President

Continued on page

Continued from page 5

that the Inspector General of Police should instruct his police officers should not take into custody or detain any person without satisfactory investigation being carried out in the first place; that if a person provides satisfactory proof of his residence, he should not be detained unless the police had evidence that he had committed a crime; and that where persons are found to be not in possession of their National Identity Cards, they should be given reasonable time to produce them. The President had agreed that these are reasonable requests and that he would convey them to the IGP, Mr. Sellasamy said.

More Arrests

The Moratuwa police in a lightning early morning operation on 27 May in Moratuwa town, Moratumuula, Kattubedda and Laksapathiya took into custody 19 persons including three women, and detained them for 'further investigations'. Among those arrested were four Sinhalese who had rented out rooms to Tamils from the north and east without informing the police as laid down under emergency regulations. According to the police most of the Tamils arrested did not have their National Identity Cards and they had no valid reason to be in Moratuwa.

During the second week of June, Police announced that four Tamils including 'two hardcore Tigers' were seized by them when they swooped down on a house at Kotehena in Colombo, and they had been detained 'for interrogation'. Again according to another report quoting police sources 'six hardcore LTTE leaders trained in Madurai' were arrested on 11 June when the suspects attempted to 'slip into a Delica van'. 'All six of them under interrogation had confessed that they underwent military training in a special camp in Madurai and returned to Sri Lanka in early February.' But the police had refused to divulge the names of the so-called suspects. The report added that investigations had revealed that some thirty well-trained LTTE cadres had slipped into the city 'to carry out attacks on political party leaders and parliamentarians', including MEP leader Dinesh Gunawardene and SLMC leader M.H.M. Ashraff. The report further said that the vehicle in which the six suspects were travelling contained explosives, 'command wires' used for detonating bombs, batteries and wrist watches.

Thondaman Defends Presidential System and Seeks More Power for CWC

Minister and CWC leader Saumiyamoorthy Thondaman has called on the government to adopt a system of proportional representation in making cabinet appointments and vowed to fight against any re-introduction of the parliamentary system of government.

In a recent interview the Minister whose Ceylon Workers Congress, secured a massive 400,000 votes at the recent PC elections, explained why he wanted PR even where cabinet portfolios were concerned.

If PR is introduced to the cabinet, it would be good in the larger interests of the whole country he said.

If the government accepts such a proposal, the CWC would have three cabinet portfolios by virtue of the percentage of votes it secured, political analysts said.

Besides PR in the cabinet, Mr. Thondaman also renewed his vow to fight for the presidential system saying any change would spell danger to the country. 'I will fight to keep the presidential system. I will fight against the re-introduction of the Westminster system,' he pledged.

In his zeal to maintain the presidential system, Mr. Thondaman lashed out at some of his cabinet colleagues saying he had good relations with President D.B. Wijetunge, but the trouble lay at another level.

'They (some ministers) enjoy the fruits of the labour of the Indian workers but they cannot appreciate their position, understand their needs and aspirations,' Mr. Thondaman said in a hard-hitting interview.

'My attitude is that the government members at the second level must try to understand the disadvantages of my people,' he added.

He said the CWC would be ever vigilant and watch the interests of the plantation workers 'I fought the elections side by side with the ruling party and I am a cabinet minister. But I have to state quite emphatically that the attitude of most members of the government towards estate workers must change,' the CWC leader said.

Explaining why he was insisting on the presidential system, Mr. Thondaman said, the man at the top could act confidently as he was elected by the whole country and therefore accountable and answerable to all.

Charging that the Westminster system was not in favour of minorities, he said, the leader of a political party even with a simple majority could lead the country keeping a wary eye on his party support.

'I am strongly of the opinion that much of the discrimination and atrocities on the minorities were due to the earlier parliamentary system,' he said.

Commenting on President Premadasa's assassination, Mr. Thondaman said it was prudent to wait till the investigations were over before any conclusions were drawn. 'We rush to conclusions. We are still not sure who did it. Stories are planted with ulterior motives. Why can't we wait until the investigations are completed?' he asked.

Mr. Thondaman speaking of a possible solution to the ethnic crisis called on the government and the LTTE not to accuse each other but to fathom the seriousness of the situation and work towards a peaceful solution.

He upheld the CWC proposal presented to the parliamentary select committee saying he still considered it to be the best, as it sought to give maximum autonomy to the Tamils within a unitary state.

He said he had received an invitation from Mangala Moonesinghe, chairman of the parliamentary select committee to attend a meeting on Wednesday but he felt there would be no use in attending this meeting.

'I see no reason for a change in our attitude now. There is no reason for me or the CWC to go back to the select committee after we walked out,' Mr. Thondaman said.

He charged that the PSC never took the CWC proposals seriously. 'They read them at the last stage after I completed them to do so as a kind of ritual rather than for serious consideration,' he added.

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Provincial Council Elections

Crisis Over Appointment of Chief Ministers

One redeeming feature of the provincial elections was that, for the first time since 1977, they were held in a relatively calm and violence-free atmosphere, and there were very few reported cases of electoral malpractice. No serious incidents of violence were reported. Until the assassinations of Lalith Athulathmudali on 23 April and President Premadasa on 1 May, many incidents of violence, including disruption of meetings, intimidation, assault and abduction of supporters of candidates occurred and many anticipated a violence-ridden dirty election. But following the assassinations, the situation had completely changed – it was markedly different from the terror and generalised violence, vote-rigging and other electoral irregularities that characterised the 1989 presidential election and 1990 parliamentary election.

The relatively peaceful atmosphere in which the elections took place might have accounted for the high voter turnout which approximated to an average of 75 percent which was much higher than for the 1989 and 1990 elections which was around 50 – 55 percent.

Free and Fair

The 25-member body of international monitors who were in Sri Lanka to oversee the elections came to the conclusion that they were free and fair. But they also made several adverse comments. They regarded the government's action in awarding increased financial benefits to public servants, pensioners and students after nominations had closed as 'improper'. The state controlled media also were not balanced in giving equal coverage to all parties and that this should be remedied. They suggested that the Provincial Councils Act should be amended to allow all parties free time specially in the electronic media.

The monitors also recommended that an all-party parliamentary select committee should be appointed to find ways and means of reducing the number of weapons held by polticians and candidates and let the police to take full responsibility for providing security to all candidates. The report of the monitors pointed out that the complexities of preferential voting within the proportional representation system adopted in Sri Lanka contributed greatly to the relatively high percentage of invalid votes, and therefore should be re-examined.

The Results

The ruling United National Party together with the Ceylon Workers Congress (which contested under the UNP banner) which had previously controlled all seven Provincial Councils was able to obtain outright victory in four Councils – Central Province with 34 seats out of a total of 58 seats; Uva Province with 22 seats out of a total of 36 seats; Sabaragamuwa Province with 24 seats out of a total of 44 seats; and North Central Province with 18 seats out of a total of 33 seats. The Peoples Eksath (United) Alliance (PEA) – a coalition of the SLFP, LSSP, CP and MEP – became the largest party in the Western Province with 45 seats out of a total of 104 seats. In the four Councils in which the UNP had obtained overall majorities, the UNP had formed the administration with its nominees sworn in as Chief Ministers. In the Western Provincial Council, the PUP has formed the administration with the support of the 17 DUNF members with Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga sworn in as Chief Minister.

In the North Western and Southern Provinces, none of the parties had an overall majority. In the North Western Province, the party positions were: UNP 25 seats; PEA 18 seats; and DUNF 19 seats. In the Southern Province, the party positions were: UNP 27 seats; PEA 22 seats; and DUNF 6 seats. Despite the fact that the UNP had no overall majorities in these two Councils, UNP nominees have been sworn in as Chief Ministers. This has been done in spite of the fact that the party managers of the PEA and DUNF supported by individual affidavits from elected members of the two parties (who together constitute a majority in these Councils) had informed the Governors that the two parties were ready to jointly form the administration. They also had given the names of their nominees for the posts of Chief Ministers.

Opposition's Anger

The appointment of the UNP nominees as Chief Ministers in the Southern and North Western PCs has produced predictable anger among the opposition parties and they have accused the ruling UNP of bringing pressure upon the Governors to act in the way they did. A major crisis between the government and the opposition is on the cards.

The opposition has alleged that the Governors of these provinces had acted unlawfully in swearing-in the UNP Chief Ministers when the UNP did not control a majority in those Councils. They question as to how the UNP with a minority of seats can be entrusted with the administration, and have threatened to pass no-confidence motions against the Chief Ministers the moment the Councils assemble.

A delegation led by Opposition Leader, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike met President Wijetunga to urge him to advise the Governors to change their mind and appoint the persons chosen by the PUP and DUNF as Chief Ministers. The President had pointed out to them that the Governors were empowered by the Constitution to call upon whoever, in their opinion, had the most support to form the administration, and expressed his unwillingness to interfere in the exercise of their constitutional powers.

Article 154B of the Constitution provides as follows:

> *'The Governor shall appoint as Chief Minister the member of the Provincial Council constituted for that Province who in his opinion is best able to command the support of a majority of the members of that Council;*
>
> *Provided that where more than one-half of the members elected to a Provincial Council are members of one political party, the Governor shall appoint the leader of that political party in the Council as Chief Minister.'*

In the case of the Southern and North Western PCs, the Governors have clearly acted within the first part of this provision. This action seems to be, *prima facie*, in line with the course adopted by the Governor of the Western Province where the PEA was the single largest party, but without an overall majority, and there he appointed Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga as Chief Minister. In the SPC and NWPC too, the UNP is the single largest party, but without an overall majority.

However, there is a difference in the two situations. In the case of the WPC, the DUNF which has 17 seats had declared its support to the PEA and there was no prospect of the danger of the PEA not being able to 'command the support of a majority of the members of the Council'. However, in the case of the SPC and NWPC, the DUNF members had in writing notified the respective Governors of their intention to support the PEA to form

Continued on page 9

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Continued from page 7

an administration with a designated Chief Minister. In these two PCs, the UNP although being the single largest party, had no such support to be able to 'command the support of a majority of the members of the Council'. In the face of this evidence before them, the Governors of these two Councils could have reasonably formed their opinion that it was the persons designated by the PEA and DUNF who could have been 'best able to command the support of the majority of Members in the Council'. In these circumstances, how the Governors formed the opinion that the UNP could command a majority in these Councils is beyond comprehension, and their action in appointing UNP Chief Ministers could be described as nothing but perverse.

Now the opposition parties (PEP and DUNF) which have been deprived of their chance to form their own administrations in the Southern and North Western PCs have taken the matter of the appointment of the UNP nominees as Chief Ministers to the Supreme Court.

State of the Parties

None of the parties, the UNP and the SLFP which led the PEA coalition and the recently formed DUNF could have been jubilant about their performance. As for the UNP, it lost the prestigious the most populous Western Province, which included the country's capital city, Colombo. Though the backlash against the UNP, arising from the perception deliberately fostered by the opposition that the Premadasa government was responsible for the assassination of Athulathmudali, might have contributed to the UNP's poor performance in the Western Province, the severity and extent of the backlash was somewhat reduced after the assassination of the President himself.

Although the UNP retained control with a much reduced majority of seats in the Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, the outcome makes it abundantly clear that it was able to do so only with the support of Thondaman's Ceylon Workers Congress. In the Central Province, 13 of the 32 members elected on the UNP ticket belong to the CWC. Four of the 11 UNP members elected from the Badulla district in the Uva Province belong to the CWC. The results also re-established the fact that the CWC leader Mr. Thondaman still commands overwhelming support among the up-country Tamils.

The ruling party also cannot ignore the fact that, on a national level, the UNP obtained 47.78 per cent of the total votes polled (2,994,612) with 187 seats whereas the combined votes polled by the opposition SLFP-led PEA and the DUNF amounted to 51.5 percent (3,226,395) with 188 seats, and on this showing on a national level, the prospects of the UNP retaining power against a combined opposition in a future election are bleak.

SLFP Fails to Capitalise

Although jubilant over the capture of the Western Province, where the charismatic Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranantunga undertook an energetic campaign and amassed an astounding record 300,000 personal preferential votes, the fact is that the SLFP-led Peoples United Alliance failed to win a majority in the other six provinces. It was able to obtain only 36.77 percent (2,298,004) of the votes polled and has again demonstrated its incapacity to overtake the UNP in a direct contest.

Afflicted by a perennial and perpetual factional infighting and much publicised personality feuds at leadership level which has not ceased even in the post-election period reflected in the rather uncomplimentary personal attacks by Anura Bandaranaike against his sister Chandrika, the SLFP even after remaining out of power for the last sixteen years has not succeeded in sufficiently eroding the UNP's support base in the rural areas where the SLFP was once thought to have had its most support.

The fact is that the UNP had been seriously weakened by the split led by Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake who had become strong allies of the opposition, and only a few days before the elections, the UNP had been deprived of its most powerful and formidable campaigning leader when Premadasa was murdered. The fact that the SLFP-led coalition could not achieve a better performance at this election even against this background of the UNP's weakness cannot give much comfort to those who entertain the hope that the UNP can be easily dislodged next time round in 18 months.

The SLFP also cannot ignore the fact that it has failed to prevent the votes of the national and religious minorities living in the seven provinces going to the UNP in a substantial way. There is no doubt that the SLFP has continued to remain in the eyes of minorities that it is essentially a Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinist party. The SLFP leadership has failed to recognise that in a straightforward contest with the UNP, the votes of the minorities, particularly in a proportional electoral system of voting, are an electoral asset which it can ignore only at its peril. It must learn a lesson from the fact that, although the PEP and the DUNF captured the Western Province, the UNP won in the Colombo central electorate where a substantial section of the minorities reside.

DUNF's Future

For the Democratic United National Front (DUNF), this was its first electoral baptism, and after undertaking an impressive electoral campaign with hundreds of meetings, it suffered a brutal blow when its best known and formidable leader Athulathmudali was gunned down in the run-up to the elections. For a new party, the DUNF can be said to have performed well with obtaining 14.8 percent of the total votes polled with 53 seats while holding the balance of power in three provinces. Its remarkably good performance in the south of Colombo including Ratmalana the home-base of Athulathmudali can be accounted for by the sympathy factor following the leader's assassination.

The DUNF will find it almost impossible to replace the loss of Athulathmudali. However, the future of the DUNF is in the balance, and some commentators seem to be inclined to write off its prospects of developing into a powerful third force in the post-Premadasa period. Being an offshoot of the UNP, its genesis was purely based on its leaders' antipathy towards the personality of the late President Premadasa and the desire to oust him through a covert and ill-fated attempt at impeachment. Without a definable political ideology or policy framework, the very foundation upon which the DUNF was constructed has been removed with the unexpected and untimely demise of Premadasa.

The Left and SLMC Fail

As for the left parties, the LSSP and CP went to the polls under the banner of the SLFP-led PEA, and there is no indication that they have fared any better. The NSSP – the only party which had taken a clear stand on the ethnic question – led by Vasudeva Nanayakkara contested the elections under its own steam, but fared badly winning only one council seat in the Ratnapura district. From the 1930s until the 1960s, when the LSSP and CP remained wedded to their party principles and policies, they had a substantial mass base of their own and occupied a central position in the body politic and played a significant role in the political process of the country. Since then their association with the

Continued on page 15

Premadasa Assassination Probe

'Killer Got Near President Via his Valet'

Senior Police Officer Arrested

In a sensational turn in the continuing investigation into the assassination of President Premadasa, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, identified as Douglas Perera, who was entrusted with the security of the former President's private residence 'Sucharitha', was taken into custody and placed under detention on 11 June. Along with the ASP, three other suspects, including a policeman, believed to have been close associates of the suicide-bomber Kulaveerasingham Veerakumar alias Kumar alias Babu of Gurunagar in Jaffna have also been taken into custody and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

A Special Investigating Team (SIT) comprising 50 police detectives, including ten senior gazetted officers, headed by Deputy Inspector General of Police (CID), Mr. Amarasena Rajapakse, has been appointed by the Inspector General of Police to investigate the late President's assassination. The SIT will investigate whether there was a conspiracy to kill the President, the people responsible for the killing, and whether there were any security lapses. Although the authorities are continuing to accuse the LTTE of involvement in the President's and Lalith Athulathmudali's assassination, the Tigers have denied it.

The SIT is reported to have been interrogating some of the late President's security service personnel and domestic staff following the assassination who had moved closely with Babu and enjoyed his hospitality. The SIT is reported to have been scrutinising the personal bank accounts of the close associates of the alleged assassin Babu. It was following revelations from these interrogations that the arrest of the ASP and the others followed.

These four persons had allegedly withheld information about Babu even after they came to know of Babu's involvement in the assassination, but it is not known whether Babu had revealed to them in advance his plan to assassinate the President. It is said that the four suspects, the ASP, the police constable and two members of the slain President's staff had been very close to Babu and posed for photographs and had frequently met him.

Investigations are said to have revealed that when Babu's picture appeared in the newspapers, these men had broken into the flat where Babu lived with the intention of destroying the pictures and other possible evidence whch would have inevitably linked them with the alleged assassin. However, they did not find anything as Babu had reportedly 'cleared everything' before he set out on his murderous mission.

The probe by the SIT has also reportedly revealed that these four men had on several occasions kept Babu away from the former President seeing him. On one occasion when the President had made an unscheduled return to his residence when Babu was also there, these men had got Babu to conceal himself in a room until the President left. Detectives contradicted previous reports that the late President had personally known Babu and had travelled with him. In 'Sucharitha' itself, some of the staff had a riotous time in the President's absence, feasting on liquor and women provided by Babu who had remained a teetotaller and abstained from sex.

The SIT is presently investigating the probability of a connection between Babu and Kandiah Ragunathan, the alleged assassin of Lalith Athulathmudali.

DIG Reveals Details

Mohideen, the valet of the late President, had signalled the three security men standing who tried to block the alleged suicide-bomber from reaching close to Premadasa not to do so and therefore the killer was able to walk freely towards him to explode the bomb strapped around his waist eight feet away from the slain President, Amarasena Rajapakse, Deputy Inspector General of Police (CID) said at a recently held press conference in Colombo.

The DIG told the correspondents that Mohideen was brought up by the late President from childhood; he was totally loyal to him; he slept at the late President's door and was always mindful that no harm should befall his leader. Everybody knew he was very close to the late President.

Babu had arrived wheeling a bicycle while the late President was directing a feeder procession at Armour Street to the UNP's main May Day procession. He had left the bicycle near the President's vehicle and walked towards the President. Three bodyguards tried to stop him. Mohideen then signalled to the bodyguards not to stop him and they moved away allowing free passage and access to the President. Mohideen intervened in the way he did because he had struck up a close friendship with Babu.

DIG Rajapakse said that the bomber had strapped a sophisticated plastic bomb to his waist and the exploding device was on his right. The explosion blew off his right hand. The bomb contained a kilogram of RDX similar to the explosive used by the suicide-bomber in the Rajiv Gandhi killing. The explosion blew the President to pieces and killed 22 others.

The friendship between Babu and Mohideen was such that the latter had taken Babu along when he accompanied the late President on five of his trips, which included visits to Kataragama, Embilipitya and Ambanpola. 'During these trips, Veerakumar's presence was hidden from the President. He was smuggled into the advance security vehicles. He was not seen by the President at all. If the President had seen him he would have asked about him,' the DIG said.

According to the DIG, Babu also had frequented 'Sucharitha' and become friendly with other staff including security personnel having been introduced to them by Mohideen. Using his influence, Mohideen also had helped Babu, who owned three lorries and regularly transported goods to Jaffna, to get his lorries with goods loaded from Colombo to pass through the military checkpoint at Vavuniya. Babu who took over the business of a groceries store at Dias Place in Gunesinghpura in April 1992 had befriended Mohideen and entrapped him because of his weakness for 'wine and women', and Mohideen had attended regular parties hosted by Babu at a flat where liquor and women were supplied.

Answering questions, the DIG said that some of this information had been given to the investigators by Mohideen's 'women friends' who happened to be several in number. Babu found the women for Mohideen, but he would not say that he shared the women or

drank liquor or smoked. 'He had the target right. He did not tarnish his image'.

DIG Rajapakese also said that he had information about seven weeks before the assassination on 9 March of a threat to the late President's life by possible poisoning. He conveyed this information to the President who asked the DIG to address and warn the kitchen staff. 'I spoke to the kitchen staff around midnight in the presence of DIG Gunatillake. I told the kitchen staff not to buy vegetables from the same place, but to make purchases at random. Mohideen acted as spokesman for the staff and said, 'Sir, there will be nothing. We're all clean'.

The DIG said that 23 persons had been taken into custody for questioning, two of them kitchen staff, both of them Sinhalese. They and three other Sinhalese were in custody and the other 18 were Tamils – all men.

Police released to the press photographs of two men wanted for questioning – 42-year-old Selliah Kailendran of Anaikottai and 48-year-old Markandu Selvarasah of Chankanai.

In the meantime it is learnt that Interpol has been requested by the Sri Lankan authorities to investigate as to how a video tape of the bomb blast in which Premadasa was killed on 1 May was telecast in many foreign countries so soon after the incident. TV viewers in foreign countries were able to see vivid pictures of the bomb blast as it occurred and also the destruction it caused. Police in Sri Lanka believe that the bomb attack was video-taped possibly by those associated with the suicide-bomber Kulasingham Weerakumar in the conspiracy to assassinate the late President.

Athulathmudali's Murder

Additional Colombo Magistrate, M.A. Silva, on 4 June held that the suspected assassin in the Lalith Athulathmudali assassination case had died of cyanide poisoning in an apparent case of suicide, while the DUNF leader had died of gunshot injuries. He reached this conclusion after the Government Analyst's ballistic report had been presented to court.

According to this Analyst's report, the bullet recovered from the body found at Mugalan Road in Colombo some hours after the killing of Athulathmudali had been fired from the gun used by Athulathmudali's bodyguard who shot at the gunman who fired at Athulathmudali. The bullet recovered from Athulathmudali's body had been fired with the weapon found by the dead body at Mugalan Road.

The report of the Government Analyst stated that the five bullets found at the Kirullapona playground near the platform from where Athulathmudali was addressing an election meeting, and the single bullet found near the suspected assassin at Mugalan Road came from the same gun. The five spent bullets found near the platform had been fired from Mr. Athulathmudali's security officer's gun.

By the time the Court made the order, the team of Scotland Yard detectives who had been commissioned by the Sri Lankan authorities to investigate the assassination of Athulathmudali had left for London. The Magistrate on an application by the State Counsel directed that the productions in the case, including the bullets and the guns used by the alleged gunman and Athulathmudali's bodyguard should be sent to the Scotland Yard laboratory for further examination and they should be accompanied by a senior officer of the Government Analyst's Department who had handled the examination in Colombo.

Recent reports indicate that the Crime Detective Bureau (CDB) probing the assassination of the DUNF leader Lalith Athulathmudali has taken into custody for questioning nine persons alleged to be close associates of Iyakannu Sathyavel and Pedrupillai Jebanesan alias Kavushalayan who disappeared from their place of residence soon after the assassination. The alleged gunman of Mr. Athulathmudali, Kandiah Ragunathan and Sathyavel are reported to have been running the 'Asiri Radio or TV' repair shop in Pettah in Colombo as a cover for their activities, according to the police. According to police sources, Sathyavel and Jebanesan had been identified by members of the public following the publication of their photographs.

Whither the Tamil Question ?
After Premadasa

(by our Special Corresponent in Colombo)

Among the leading non-left southern politicians, Ranasinghe Premadasa was an unorthodox politician. He always protrayed himself as a leader committed to building a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. While presenting the image of the authentic Buddhist leader, he did not hesitate to be present and participate in other religious functions at a christian church, hindu temple or a mosque. He did not mind being accused of being surrounded by his 'Tamil supporters'. According to his southern-based chauvinist detractors, his greatest crime was his association with the Ceylon Workers Congress leader Mr. S. Thondaman. It was therefore not surprising that many a Tamil person believed that if at all there was a politician who could produce a solution to the ethnic problem, it was Premadasa.

However, the fact was that by the time of his untimely death, matters had already reached a dead end in Premadasa's much vaunted effort to find an amicable solution to the Tamil question. Mindful that the election for a second term of the presidency was not far off, it had become very clear that his government was not going to stick its neck out in coming up with a bold initiative on the ethnic conflict during the remaining period of Premadasa's first term in office.

The All Party Conference which dragged on for nearly two years, and later the Parliamentary Select Committee which again continued for another two years had signally failed even to reach 'a minimum consensus' with the Tamil parties in Colombo. A creeping suspicion that the former President was actually undermining the Tamil cause began to emerge among the Tamil parties particularly after the sudden appearance of the relatively unknown Mr. P. Srinivasan with his proposals. Although they had no conclusive evidence, the other Tamil parties were convinced that Mr. Srinivasan was Premadasa's Trojan horse.

In the run-up to the provincial council elections, even the routine conciliatory rhetoric of the former President was seen receding into the background. He said he was 'seeking a mandate from the people' to implement a solution which the Parliamentary Select Committee would come up with – although by this time the PSC had already reached a deadend with all the Tamil parties including the CWC having pulled out from its sittings. The elections were taking place only in the southern seven Sinhalese provinces, and here was Premadasa seeking a 'mandate from the people' to solve the Tamil question!

In the backdrop of this legacy on the

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11

ethnic question from the former President, the new President D.B. Wijetunga and his cabinet are unlikely to make any new moves on the ethnic question. The first concern of the post-Premadasa leadership of the UNP must be to consolidate itself and regain support in its traditional Sinhala constituency. The loss of the prestigious Western Provincial Council and its failure to retain overall control of two other Provincial Councils – Southern and North Western – in the recently held elections must have already sent danger signals to the UNP hierarchy of the probability of being thrown out of power when general and presidential elections are held.

The opposition's display of unprecedented cordiality and offer of cooperation on the day of Mr. Wijetunga's election as the new President is something that the present leadership would not like to dissipate by seeking to raise the thorny issue of the ethnic question with a view to finding a solution. It would not be surprising if those Tamil groups like the PLOTE, TELO and EPDP, which were befriended by Premadasa and which collaborated with the army in fighting the LTTE, lose government patronage and are kept at a distance with a view to placating the opposition. The opposition's target was Premadasa and his death has drawn out the deadly venom from the fangs of the opposition, and the new leaders of the UNP would want very much to keep it that way until the next presidential elections.

However, in the hope of assuring foreign investors and donors, the rhetorical legacy of the former President about the ever present possibility of a peaceful resolution of the conflict will be continued. The contradiction between the need to create the impression internationally about the government's peaceful intentions on the one hand, and domestic political compulsions arising from the need to recapture popular support within the Sinhala constituency on the other became quite apparent in the conflicting statements made by the new President within a few days of assuming office. In his first message to the nation in the immediate aftermath of Premadasa's assassination, Mr. Wijetunga denied the existence of an ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and pronounced the need for wiping out 'Tiger terorism' from the country. He also promised a delegation of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) which met him soon after assuming office as acting President that his government would take concerted steps to militarily crush the LTTE.

But within five days, he told the press that the government had its doors open for talks with the Tigers. Asked by a journalist as to whether his government was planning to intensify military operations against the Tigers in the north, Mr. Wijetunga denied that there was any such plan. The indications are, while the late President's posture of apparent conciliation is unlikely to be abandoned by the new UNP leadership for very pragmatic reasons, Mr. Wijetunga and his cabinet ministers will have their hands full with tackling all kinds of problems other than the conflict in the northeast for the remaining 18 months of the presidency. In fact the setback suffered by the UNP in the provincial council elections and the outright capture of the Western Provincial Council with the possibility that the power in the Southern and North Western PCs also might fall into opposition hands will pose more problems for the ruling party in that the opposition will have the prospect of having greater access to more resources, influence and better opportunities through the exercise of provincial powers for destabilising the central authority of the UNP.

The strong stand taken by Mr. Thondaman and the CWC during the last two years, particularly in connection with the proceedings of the Parliamentary Select Committee, had been a significant factor on the Tamil side. They had adopted a consistent strong stand on the continued maintenance of the Northeast as a merged provincial unit and had expressed outspoken opposition to UNP's and SLFP's proposal to delink into the pre-existing two provinces. Mr. Thondaman did not hesitate to advocate that the government should resume negotiations with the Tigers. He even wrote a letter not long ago to the Tiger leader V. Prabhakaran to the effect that there was a conspiracy afoot against the Tamils through the Parliamentary Select Committee process. In adopting such a stand while being a member of the cabinet, Mr. Thondaman incurred the wrath of the Colombo-based media and opposition politicians.

No-one doubts that it is because of the CWC support and Mr. Thondaman's personal following that the UNP was able to retain power in the other four Provincial Councils. In fact in the Central, Sabaragamuwa and Uva provinces, the CWC has increased its representation. This being the case, it would have been natural to expect an enhancement of the CWC's position and that of Mr. Thondaman vis-a-vis the ruling party.

But the alleged link of the LTTE in the assassination of Premadasa has complicated matters. If and when it becomes firmly established that the LTTE was involved in the assassination, it is certain that there will be pressure upon the CWC leader to radically revise his stand on the question of dealing with the Tigers. if the Tigers did in fact order the killing of Premadasa, then they have wilfully negated the role of Thondaman as their sole advocate in the south.

Besides Thondaman, the role played by people like Colombo's deputy Mayor Ganeshalingam and lawyer Motilal Nehru in buttressing and affirming Premadasa's conciliatory posture towards the Tamils will also become diminished or negated. In short, it would seem that the UNP will sooner than later shed the 'unorthodox elements' which Premadasa grafted on to its traditional Sinhala-Buddhist elitist leadership. From ex-revolutionary Dayan Jayatilleke to the Tamil Congress ex-general secretary Motilal Nehru, there had been a wide array of persons who did not belong to the UNP, but had gravitated close to the former President mainly on the strength of their usefulness vis-a-vis the Tamil national question. Coming from his much publicised solid Kandyan upper caste background (very much appreciated in private by the Opposition Leader, Mrs. S. Bandaranaike, according to an opposition MP), Mr. Wijetunga is unlikely to be inclined to continue with the 'unorthodox' affiliations of his predecessor in handling the Tamil question. The same can also be said of the new Prime Minister, Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe. It can, therefore, be safely predicted that under the new leadership of the UNP the unusual degree of presence and prominence gained by several persons belonging to the minority communities, including SLMC leader M.H.M. Ashraff, during the Premadasa presidency will soon decline.

Henceforth the character of the state's approach to the Tamil question may become more formal – as an issue the day to day developments and direction of which will be mediated to the government through the domain of civilian and military bureaucracy. According to the leader of a Colombo-based Tamil group, such a development has a positive side to it as far as the political fortunes of the non-LTTE groups are concerned. According to him, benefitting from non-chauvinist image and posture of the former President, the UNP in recent times had made substantial inroads into their constituencies in the 'liberated areas'

Continued on page 15

India's Second Coming?

Has the LTTE become too strong for the Sri Lankan state to handle by itself? The depletion of senior officers in the military establishment both due to becoming casualties in their war against the Tigers and to retirement, the inability of the government to attract recruits to the various sectors of the armed forces, the failure of the army to shift the military stalemate in its favour, the recent assassinations of southern politicians, and the fear that the Tigers are in a position to pick and choose at will the individual and time to carry out such assassinations anywhere in the island would appear to have produced a change in the thought processes among influential sections in the south to the extent that many are talking seriously about seeking Indian direct intervention for the second time. They seem to identify a common cause between Colombo and New Delhi in fighting the Tigers on the ground that the LTTE poses a threat to India as well. In the post-Premadasa period, they seem to have suddenly recognised the role of India in seeking a solution to the island's ethnic conflict and the need to secure Indian assistance primarily to fight the Tigers, and in this connection invoke the much maligned Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of July 1987 to legitimise military assistance from India and even the return of Indian troops.

Not that there is much evidence that New Delhi would be eager to embroil itself militarily in Sri Lanka for a second time. The first time it intervened, India suffered immense losses and had to encounter enormous criticism both within India and outside. The feeling in New Delhi after the IPKF pullout was that Colombo was ungrateful and the Tamils were guilty of ingratitude. 'Let the Sinhalese and Tamils wallow in the ethnic quagmire of their own creation. We have washed our hands off', was the comment of a senior Indian diplomat in Colombo last year. However, recent indications seem to suggest a renewed Indian interest in Sri Lankan affairs. This may be due to the fact of the Indian government's inability to completely eradicate the reported Tiger penetration and presence in Tamil Nadu despite a continuing crackdown against suspected Tiger supporters, or due to the improved relations between New Delhi and Colombo or a combination of both.

In this connection, observers seem to attach greater significance to the recent visit to Colombo of the well known editor of the Indian magazine 'Frontline', Mr. N. Ram. The several pages of coverage given to the recent assassinations, the political fallout therefrom and a long interview with the new President in the magazine would suggest that the Editor was in Colombo in the course of his normal journalistic duties. But to conspiracy theorists, Mr. Ram is no ordinary journalist. They draw attention to the crucial role he played in the events that preceded the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987, his continuing interest in Sri Lankan political developments and personalities he met during his latest visit. The fact that Indian journalists fiercely assert their independence from governmental interference has not prevented speculation by observers in Colombo that Mr. Ram's latest visit may have had official sanction from New Delhi.

Two further events seem to have added to the speculation about a renewed Indian role. The popular Sinhala language tabloid *Yukthiya* – not so friendly to the ruling party or the government in its coverage of news or comment – carried a prominently placed item in its May 15 issue to the effect that Mr. Varatharaja Perumal, the former EPRLF Chief Minister of the Northeast Provincial Council and who has lived in self-imposed exile in India for the last three years, was expected to return shortly to Sri Lanka with Delhi's blessings to play a crucial role in initiating a new peace process, and to revive the now defunct provincial council system of government in the Northeast.

The *Yukthiya* story was based on indications in Colombo following Premadasa's death that the new administration in power was amenable to allowing India to play a role in bringing the Tigers to heel. A political correspondent of the paper pointed out that the new President Mr. D.B. Wijetunga, in one of his first interviews after assuming power, did not rule out the possibility of seeking India's active military involvement to facilitiate the ongoing war against the LTTE in the north. In apparent corroboration of this line of thought, it was pointed out that it was not a mere accident that the first Tamil political group the new Prime Minister had chosen to meet was the EPRLF, a group which had always advocated an Indian role in the resolution of the ethnic conflict. The EPRLF was also the first group to meet the newly elected Chief Minister of the Western Provincial Council, Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga, to discuss the status of the minorities in the south in general and the ethnic question in particular.

The EPRLF spokesman, responding to queries from journalists following these developments did not rule out the possibility of the new Colombo administration taking a fresh initiative on the ethnic problem with Delhi's active mediation in which the EPRLF would once again be in a position to play a key role.

The ***Lakdiva***, a pro-JVP Sinhala language tabloid which has the largest circulation among opposition journals in the south, also carried a full page lead story recently claiming that moves were afoot to bring the Indian army again with a view to fighting the LTTE in the north and east. The paper also claimed that Indian diplomats were in touch with the new leadership of the UNP to explore the possibility and work out modalities of military and diplomatic cooperation to marginalise the Tigers, and that the former President J.R. Jayawardene was behind these moves to bring back the Indian army to Sri Lanka.

But unlike the *Yukthiya*, the ***Lakdiva*** adopted an extremely hostile attitude towards the idea of seeking India's military involvement again in the island. The ***Lakdiva's*** claim that such an eventuality would be detrimental to the overall political wellbeing of the country was suffused with the JVP's classic theory of 'Indian Expansionism'. Although it is widely known that the remnants of the JVP which survived the counter-insurgency terror of 1989-90 have reviewed their stand vis-a-vis Indian hegemonism after Somawansa Amrarasinghe – the current JVP leader in exile – took refuge in India, it was clear that ***Lakdiva*** was intent on whipping up anti-Indian sentiment in the south.

The *Yukthiya* followed up its story on Varatharaja Perumal's possible return with another report on May 30 to the effect that India was concerned about the developments in Sri Lanka and that a dialogue at unofficial level between the two countries had taken place on the question of jointly addressing the problem of the ethnic conflict Suresh Premachandran MP and leader of the EPRLF left for New Delhi towards the end of May 'on official business' including a meeting with Varatharaja Perumal to discuss new developments and the *Yukthiya* attributed the trip to a series of fresh manoeuvres by the EPRLF with Indian blessing.

Speculation about the possibility of Indian involvement was given further

Continued on page 15

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Continued from page 13

impetus by reports appearing in the Colombo newspapers, particularly the Tamil language daily *Virakesan*. The paper reported that a petition signed by some important personalities belonging to the Sinhala community had been sent to the new President and his Ministers calling upon the government to seek without delay Indian military assistance to 'defeat the Tigers'. The *Virakesari* report was a translation of a news item that had appeared in the Madras-based Indian national newspaper *The Hindu*, and as such it gained greater credibility among the Tamil reading public. The report claimed that the petition had been signed by many important persons including a retired army General, a retired Deputy Inspector General of Police, a leading Buddhist Mahanayake Thero, a senior member of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress and a Sri Lankan senior diplomat. The names of the signatories had not been revealed for 'security reasons' in the copies released to selected editors and journalists in the south of the island. Copies of the petition had also been sent to the President of India Mr. Shankar Dayal Sharma and Prime Minister Narasimha Rao through the Indian High Commission in Colombo. A document such as this which would have in normal circumstances been ignored by the discerning sections of Colombo's political elite, received particular attention among many Tamils because of the importance given to it by *The Hindu* and the circumstances in which the petition came to surface. The petition which every one had heard about, but very few had seen was titled, **'The urgent need to recall the Indian Army to exterminate the LTTE before the LTTE wipes out the Sri Lankan Parliament'.**

The petition states:

'The LTTE is now so deep-rooted in Sri Lanka, India and elsewhere that our army which is now depleted of its experienced and competent generals and crack elite troops, has not the military might to wipe out the LTTE in Sri Lanka. . . . It is only with the assistance of the Indian army that we will be able to eradicate the LTTE within a reasonable period of time. For how long is the northeast war going to drag on? Consider the expenditure involved, crippling the country's economy and driving the country to bankruptcy. We have sacrificed a large number of our brave officers and over 5000 of our beloved soldiers in the northeast after the withdrawal of the IPKF. If the Indian army had continued to remain in Sri Lanka, they would have crushed the LTTE by now. Then the world would have been happy to see alive today Premadasa, Rajiv Gandhi, Lalith Athulathmudali, Ranjan Wijeratne, Denzil Kobbekaduwa, Clancy Fernando, Amirthalingam etc., 5000 troops and thousands of civilians who had been victims of the LTTE's cannibalism. The IPKF is alleged to have harassed civilians in Jaffna – which they deserved for harbouring the LTTE cadres. The Sinhala people in the northeast were never harassed. To save our democracy and sovereignty, we have no other alternative but to recall the Indian army to assist us. We are confident that the Indian government will be glad to accede to our request because they have the men, material and the money, and above all a very vital reason to destroy the LTTE. . . . President Premadasa sent the IPKF away for three reasons which he thought were important at that time:

(a) To win the presidential election;
(b) To get the support of the people to destroy the JVP; and
(c) His personal displeasure with J.R. Jayawardene and Rajiv over the Accord.

Now that the situation has completely changed and the personalities are no longer with the living, we can certainly recall the Indian army at this critical time. India came to our rescue in 1971 during the JVP insurrection and we are confident that all Members of Parliament, both government and opposition, and all unbiased right thinking intellectuals in Sri Lanka and India will strongly support this resolution'.

The petition ends by calling upon the Triple Gems to protect and guide the new President at a moment of national crisis. It seems clear that the petition has been authored by Sinhala-Buddhists. However it is still too early to consider the ramifications and seriousness of this document. But it can be said with certainty that its significance lies in the fact that it reflects a certain frame of mind which appears to be evolving out of the sense of futility that is now generally associated with the prosecution of the war. Gaining the upper hand is nowhere in sight for the Sri Lankan army, and still worse is the silent but perceivable alarm among the politically conscious Sinhalese that they are losing capable leaders who can prosecute the war against the LTTE with experience and confidence. By striking ultimately at Premadasa and bringing the war to an unmanageable stalemate, the LTTE has succeeded in creating a creeping despondency and apathy among the Sinhalese in recent times. The petition is one indication of the possible direction in which this mood might make a section of the Sinhalese to turn.

Continued from page 9

SLFP would appear to have commenced a gradually sharp decline which presently appears to be terminal with the passing away of most of their one time charismatic, popular and powerful leaders.

For the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), which achieved prominence during the previous provincial council elections and laid claim to represent the Muslims on an island-wide basis, the results represent a disaster. It managed to win just two seats with .76 percent of the votes polled. The Muslims, by and large, would appear to have abandoned the SLMC and opted to vote for either the UNP or the PEA.

Continued from page 12

of the northeast thereby deriving a certain legitimacy which it did not have in Tamil areas after 1977. The clear demarcation maintained in the northeast since the general elections of 1977 between the majoritarian parties and the Tamil parties and groups – the former as illegitimate outsiders and the latter as the rightful representatives of the Tamil nation – was, in his point of view, gradually being eroded by Premadasa's efforts to woo the minorities for the purpose of stabilising his own position in the south. With Premadasa's death, this leader (whose followers collaborate with the army) hoped that the demarcation would be re-established once again in their long term interests.

There is a body of opinion that believes that the UNP might revert to its traditional Sinhala-Buddhist footing which may gradually but inevitably lead to the adoption of a hard military option in dealing with the northeastern problem. However, given the present ground realities of the war, such an option may become very untenable. Vast areas of the Northern province is still under Tiger control: a fragile military equilibrium has been achieved at great cost in the populated centres in the east; this situation is being sustained with great difficulty by optimum levels of troop and hardware deployment in addition to special operations units. There is very little that the government can do at present to radically alter this situation of a virtual stalemate.

'What Went Wrong Between the Tigers and Premadasa?'

by Taraki

What went wrong between Prabhaharan and Premadasa? It was almost a fanatical belief among many Sinhalese and even among some Tamils who are usually well informed that President Premadasa was somehow in cahoots with the LTTE. The diplomatic cocktail circuit and the intelligence community which normally hold the prerogative on the truth of such momentous issues contributed in no small measure in entertaining and propagating this belief. And of course it suited the political objectives of those who stood to benefit from this belief's persistence.

And hence the question 'What went wrong between Prabhaharan and Premadasa?' is naturally bound to arise among those who have fervently subscribed to the belief that Premadasa would ultimately talk to the Tigers. The question sounds almost silly if one were to view the position taken by the LTTE from the time it had talks with the government, in 1989.

It would also demonstrate how a large number of decisions and perceptions which have determined the course of the war and its politics have been essentially shaped by interpretations arising from certain fundamental beliefs about the ethnic conflict, which have gained currency in the south from time to time. The LTTE had made its point clear from last year – that Premadasa's pro-Tamil stand was an insidious sham.

The message reiterated was this – the Tigers brook no one who dares to lead them up the garden path with view to ultimately destroy them.

The ***Hot Spring***, currently Jaffna's only English tabloid which was established and edited by Mr. S. Kodeswaran – (the man from Trincomalee who figured in the case on language rights which became a landmark in the legal history of Sri Lanka) carried an article by one S. Alagaratnam six days before Premadasa was blown up.

The writer takes to task those in the south who were crying foul at Bishop Kenneth Fernando for undertaking a peace mission to Jaffna. He says: 'I have gone through tens of letters to the editor of the Island including that of a lady of 83, and several, articles on the subject of the Anglican Bishop of Colombo meeting with Prabahahkaran. It is a pity the Sinhalese people as a whole (Vasudeva Nanayakkara – one swallow does not make a summer) fail to understand the aspirations of the Tamil people and the acute problems they are facing, problems forced on them by successive Sinhalese governments from the day this island gained independence.'

The writer goes on to say: 'some of the writers question the propriety of Prabhaharan bringing in shiploads of arms while speaking of peace, is not President Premadasa purchasing Puccara bombers, supersonic bombers and what not, while always saying there will have to be a political solution and not a military solution to the ethnic problem? If Prabahaharan is not armed and ready to repel the invading forces what right has he to talk of peace?

'One of the writers says the Rev. Bishop should have sent a bullet through Prabhaharan's brain. The most suitable person to receive this gift in his brain is President Premadasa, as commander of the forces ordering the firing of artillery shells from army camps and navy vessels all the 24 hours of the day.

'Does not this cowardly act kill the ordinary innocent Tamil, destroy his house, destroy his temple, school, market, shop and what not besides playing psychological havoc especially among women and children? This type of war was not carried out against the JVP because the victims will be Sinhalas, his kith and kin. And practically every day this President says aloud that the war is only against the Tigers and not against the Tamil people.

'Why do not these writers and the Sinhalese people as a whole see this diabolic crime? One can understand the firing of these when the army is on the move to capture a Tiger held area. . . .but to do this practically every day and at all hours even in the nights is pure simple genocide.

'Here I would like to remind the efforts made by Chancellor Helmut Khol to punish Eric Honecker for ordering the killing of east Germans crossing into West Germany.

'Now who is going to punish Premadasa for this heinous war crime?

'Has to be left to Karma only' (The ***Hot Spring*** – 25-04.93).

Of course it was quite clear six days later that the task of punishing Premadasa was not left to the whims of Karma but to the lethal determination of a Black Tiger.

The Tigers began to identify President Premadasa as the chief belligerent among the Sinhalese from mid last year. Around that time ***Erimalai***, an official LTTE magazine put out in France with material prepared in Jaffna, had this to say commenting on the pacifist image Premadasa had managed to cultivate among the Tamils. 'There is nothing more false than the claim that the president desires peace, but has to go along with the desire of the army to achieve military victory. The Sri Lankan president is the supreme commander of the armed forces. He presides at the Security Council meeting every week. The truth is that it is the President who is trying to guide the army towards a military victory., (p.18).

It appears that the LTTE had come to the conclusion that Premadasa was actually setting about creating the ideal political and international environment for facilitating the military effort against them. And their problem seems to have been that he was doing it subtly and effectively. But then Premadasa in a moment of supreme confidence slipped, when he nonchalantly told a delegation of Tamil political leaders early last year that he would stand by his party's decision to campaign for the demerger of the northeast.

The Tigers became quite wary of Premadasa's intentions after this. They had characterised him as a Sinhala chauvinist leader who was anyway a better bet for them because he was a strong nationalist – meaning that he would not seek Indian assistance to fight them. It is in this context that they tried to save him during the crisis created by the impeachment. LTTE's decision to send the eleven EROS MPs who were under their control for the purpose of voting with the government on the impeachment, was based on the perception that the Indians were behind the move to impeach Premadasa and that they would prop up Gamini Dissanayake, who according to them would have no qualms about inviting India to crush them.

But it appears that from mid '92 the LTTE was becoming suspicious that Premadasa was gradually being drawn wittingly or unwittingly into the Indian orbit. It was noted in the Peninsula that Premadasa was giving a free hand to what was described as the militarist lobby to push the line publicly that it would be stupid to talk to the LTTE and that it should be defeated militarily at whatever cost.

Continued on page 29

Sri Lanka in the Vortex of International Conspiracy

Revelations by Israeli Agent

Israeli intelligence agent Ari Ben-Menashi who claims he worked for former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says that he visited Sri Lanka and met President Premadasa, a minister, top officials and the PLO representative in an attempt to sell US C-130 planes to Iran which was forbidden by the United States. He also states that he went to Jaffna and met 'a middle aged, short chubby dark complexioned man' on an $8 million arms deal involving the PLO.

These claims are made in a book *Profits of War* published recently by an internationally reputed publisher Allen and Unwin. The plot he says involves agreement between Shamir and the USSR to make Jordan the homeland for Palestinians, closer collaboration between Israel and the PLO and release three Israeli soldiers who were held in Lebanon.

Ari Ben-Menashi was arrested in the US for attempting to sell C-130 planes to Iran, charged before courts but acquitted of the charges.

Following are excerpts from his book:

For all his public image, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was a very private man. Having fought underground against the British and then, having spent the rest of his life in Mossad, rising to operations chief for Europe, he had learned not to trust people. He carried this mistrust into his position as prime minister, and there were a number of decisions he made that he refused to share even with his own party members. Many of his secrets were learned only on a need-to-know basis. Some of his secrets were known only by trusted advisors of whom I was one. I knew, for example about the bank account held by Shamir's son Yair, which had been started up after Admoni, I, and others had taken some profits in 1987. I knew how often Shamir would get things he believed were in Israel's interests done without cabinet consent – such as sending me to Peru to collect the nuclear substances.

Exchange of Intelligence between Soviet Union and Israel.

And I was also well aware of Shamir's closeness to the Soviets. As early as 1984 Shamir had authorized intelligence exchanges with the Soviets, including sanitized American intelligence reports about nuclear issues and evaluations of Soviet nuclear technology. These reports were obtained in part through Rafi Eitan's US spy network. One intelligence exchange meeting took place in New Delhi between the KGB, Mossad, and Indian intelligence to discuss the Pakistani nuclear reactor and India's desire to destroy it. The three nations were all afraid of President Zia ul Haq's nuclear project, which was known to the US but overlooked as his prize for backing the Mujahedin in Afgfhanistan. Shamir saw the Libyan-financed project, known as the Islamic Bomb, as a direct threat to Israel, just like the Iraqi nuclear program. It was bizarre, but on nuclear issues our American allies and their friends such as Pakistan and Iraq were aligned against Israel, forcing Shamir to find support from the Soviet Union.

In 1986, after Chebrikov and Shamir reached an agreement on the immigration of Soviet Jews, the flow of Israeli intelligence to the Soviet Union expanded even more. Israel began regularly exchanging intelligence with the Soviets on the capabilities of the pro-American Arab countries – Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and even Iraq, although the Soviets were also arming the Iraqis. For their part, the Soviets, as late as 1989, were handing over information to Israel from their network in Iran about the Iraqi nuclear and chemical arsenals. They were also reporting about US and other nations' relations with the Iraqis.

It was altogether a very friendly affair, particularly after the Israelis had transferred so much of the slush into Soviet repositories. Shamir became very chummy with Chebrikov, as did other members of the Joint Committee. As a result of these relationships with the East Bloc, I was later accused of being a Soviet sympathizer.

One of Shamir's best-kept secrets was his clandestine attempt to negotiate a solution of his own to the Palestinian situation with the PLO.

Despite Israel's generally perceived enmity with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Shamir and some of the PLO leadership shared a common belief that peace in the Middle East would come not by Israel's giving up the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but by allowing the Palestinians to establish their own nation in what is now Jordan.

King Hussein became an American favorite. As long as he ruled Jordan and there was no Palestinian state there, militant Palestinians would be no threat to America's oil supply in neighbouring Saudi Arabia. Golda Meir and other Labor leaders, following America's lead, were not interested in dethroning King Hussein.

PLO

In the meantime, after the 1967 war, the PLO and other Palestinian groups moved out of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into Jordan. Hussein thought wrongly that he would be able to contain them. The PLO with its forces became a state within a state, and the King lost complete control of large portions of his country. The PLO began hijacking civilian airliners and bringing them to Jordan. The situation reached a crisis in 1970 when the PLO landed three commercial planes in Az-Zarqa, Jordan, ordered the passengers off, and then blew the aircraft up, with the King unable to do a thing about it.

Realizing how little power he had over the Palestinians, King Hussein decided to unleash his army against them. He achieved some success until the Syrians decided, in 1970, to intervene on behalf of the Palestinians. At issue was the very existence of the King – or the establishment of a Palestinian state in Jordan. It was then that Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir arguably made the worst political mistake in the history of Israel. She ordered the Israel Defense Forces to be mobilized against the Syrians. In doing so, she prevented the establishment of a Palestinian state in Jordan, and she kept the King in power. The threat by militant Palestinians to Saudi oilfields was prevented, which made the Americans happy, but as far as Israel's longterm strategic interest was concerned, any hopes of creating a Palestinian state in Jordan had received a major setback. Ultimately the price of this decision could still be the very existence of Israel.

As a result of Golda Meir's decision, King Hussein was able to manoeuvre

Continued on page 18

Continued from page 17

his army within Jordan, massacre some 20,000 Palestinians, and throw all the PLO people out of Jordan. As the PLO moved into Lebanon, many Palestinian fighters came to the Jordan-Israel border and surrendered to Israeli troops rather than fall into the hands of the Bedouin army, which had a reputation for not taking prisoners.

After Likud took power in Israel in 1977, Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egypt's President Sadat came up with a face-saving formula over the Palestinian issue and talked about autonomy in the West Bank. Begin gave the Sinai back, and Sadat let go of the West Bank and the Palestinian issue. All Sadat was interested in was getting back the Sinai. The Gaza Strip, which had been under Egyptian control before 1967, had no appeal for him because it had a large Palestinian population. For Begin, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were important for Israel to retain both for historical and strategic reasons.

After the Camp David agreements, and after the Republicans had taken over in 1981, the US and the 'moderate' Arab countries started pressing for a mini-Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, which would not threaten US oil interests, as would a Palestine state in Jordan, which Likud wanted. Likud believed that Israel could work closely with a Palestinian state established in Jordan, but nothing was done about it. The 1984 election resulted in a hung parliament and the formation of the famous Likud-Labor coalition. Then Shimon Peres, who was prime minister from late 1984 to late 1986, agreed to consider some type of international conference to discuss the issue of a Palestinian entity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, conforming with US policy. But Likud, a major partner in the coalition, blocked the whole initiative and thus acelerated the US tilt toward Iraq.

Conspiracy against Jordan where a Palestinian state to be created and secret meeting with Arafat in Tunis.

With Shamir back in power after 1986, secret attempts were made to talk to the Palestinian leadership, including the PLO – even though to this day the organization is not publicly or officially recognized by the Israeli government, especially Likud. The talks involved a plan to get rid of the King of Jordan and take over his country as a Palestinian state. The population was 70 percent Palestinian anyway. Such a plan would have outraged the Labor Party in Israel, the US Republican administration, the King of Jordan, and the Saudis, if any of them found out about it. However, various Palestinian circles, especially what was known as the radical camp, along with the Syrians and the Soviet Union, were happy to go along with it.

Soviets

The Soviets believed a Palestinian state sandwiched in the West Bank between Jordan and Israel would just cause more trouble in the Middle East, reducing Israel's standing as a balancing power in the region. Even though publicly the Soviet policy was anti-Israel, privately the Soviets wanted what Shamir wanted – a Palestinian state in place of Jordan. At a secret meeting in 1986, Shamir and Chebrikov agreed that there would be no negotiations with the PLO over the West Bank as such. There would be an attempt for an overall solution in the Middle East. And the cold solution would be to 'do away' with King Hussein of Jordan.

The deal between Chebrikov and Shamir was that if the Likud Party held out against a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and against an American-dictated 'peace treaty', the Soviets would help Israel. They would do this by helping Israel populate the West Bank with Jews, not only from their country but also with immigrants from Soviet-backed Ethiopia.

As events were to prove, the agreement was kept to the letter. By 1991 more than 250,000 Soviet Jews had emigrated to Israel with another 30,000 Ethiopian Jews airlifted from Addis Ababa.

The bond that developed between Israel and the Soviet Union was far stronger than anyone realized. Since Israel did not have diplomatic representation in the Soviet Union, saying they wanted to go to their homeland, but in Vienna and Rome they would apply for immigration visas to the US. This was limited by opening an Israeli consular section in Moscow through which the Israeli government would grant visas to enter Israel for Soviet Jews. All paper work was completed in Moscow, so emigrants would not go rushing off to the US. They had to go directly to Israel, where they were needed to populate the West Bank, thereby taking up the land and spoiling any US plans to grant it to the Palestinians.

The Palestinian issue came to a head after the outbreak of the Intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1987. The US was talking about a peace conference with the Palestinians and had officially sanctioned a dialogue between the US ambassador in Tunis and the PLO leadership. Shamir, instead of bowing to pressure and accepting the American proposals, announced he would come up with a peace plan of his own.

That peace plan, which essentially would create a Palestinian state in Jordan, was not made public. But Shamir discussed it with his advisers. In this period of time, Yasser Arafat was beating the wardrums against Jordan. It was risky, but risks had to be taken because US pressure on Shamir was enormous.

It was against this background that Shamir decided that several of his advisers should meet PLO leaders around the world with a view to developing the 'Jordanian option'. Orders were given to one of the advisers to travel to Tunis, to PLO headquarters, and meet Yasser Arafat. It was in late June 1989, and that meeting was the first of three with the PLO leader, on behalf of Shamir.

The feasibility and theoretical scenarios of starting a war against Jordan, with Israel supporting an all-out Palestinian uprising against the King, were discussed. This was an important part of Shamir's secret plan to resolve the Palestinian situation. Surprising as it may seem, this secret was shared with Arafat.

After these discussions with Arafat, a deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Ehud Ulmart, who was very close to Shamir, met the PLO leader, in a private home in Tunis City, where further discussions were held about the Jordanian option.

Secret proposed sale of C-130 transport planes to Iran in return for Israeli soldiers held by Shi'ites.

Based on these discussions, Prime Minister Shamir had a new secret mission for me. It was a complex plan, but if successful, it would have a twofold effect – it would free the three Israeli soldiers who were being held in Lebanon, and it would bring us closer to the PLO In our talks with them. It would require my presence in Sri Lanka.

As I flew to Colombo early in July 1989, I went over the plan, which could be likened to a political chess game in which one side moves forward but is careful to protect its interests. And at any time something could go wrong.

Despite Shamir's earlier decision

that the C-130 deal was off, he decided to try again to negotiate the sale of the planes in return for Tehran's help in securing the release of the soldiers. This time we were to try to enlist the aid of the PLO, which had a representative in Sri Lanka. If Iran could find out where the soldiers were, the PLO might be able to get them freed from the clutches of the Shi'ites, who were holding them.

Sri Lanka had been chosen because it was a different 'smoke screen' country to send the aircraft through, and the PLO had a man there I could talk to. Naturally, the PLO wanted a slice of the cake. The demands that Arafat had laid down during the secret meeting in Tunis were that, in exchange for their help, Israel should make a donation to the Sri Lankan Tamil guerrillas, the LTTE, who would then use the money to buy weapons from the PLO.

Sri Lankan Government as conduit for sale of aircraft to Iran by Israel and LTTE to buy weapons from PLO with Israeli money.

So we would be using the Sri Lankan government as a conduit for our aircraft to Iran – and we'd be using the LTTE as a cover for putting money into the hands of the PLO for their cooperation. It was a crazy situation. Israel had advisers helping the Sri Lankan Army in its fight against the rebels, yet here was I, acting on behalf of the Israeli government, arranging payment to the rebels so they could buy weapons to fight the army.

I checked into the Ramada hotel in downtown Colombo and, later that evening, wandered down to the lobby, where I ordered a welcome dish of ice cream. I struck up a friendly conversation with a man who introduced himself as the Egyptian *chargé d'affaires*. As we chatted, neither of us could help but notice a Western man in his late 60s, with a white beard, dancing alone to the small band.

'Just look at that crazy guy', said my Egyptian companion. 'He either loves dancing alone, or he can't find himself a woman.'We were soon to discover who he was. The music finished, and he flopped down in the lounge seat beside me, flapping his shirt against his chest. 'That was good exercise,' he said.

He reached into his shirt pocket and produced a business card. It portrayed planets circling the earth. It read:

One Universe
A Non-Profit Alliance

Leon Siff, Chief Organizer
National Food Relief –
Homes for the Homeless
Counselling Without Wall – Advocates for the Homeless

Siff extended a hand, explaining he was a retired probation officer from Los Angeles, who was now involved with charitable work. The full name of his organization, although his card didn't say it, was Friends of the Universe, set up, he said, to help the homeless living in and around Venice Beach in Los Angeles.

The American explained that he was Jewish and was in Sri Lanka to visit his son, who had become a Buddhist monk. I was to see a lot more of Siff during my stay in the steamy city.

Later I called the PLO representative, as previously arranged, and he was delighted to see me. We spoke in Hebrew. He had been in an Israeli jail for 12 years after trying to plant a bomb in the town of Afula. It had blown up prematurely and almost killed him.

My next meeting also arranged beforehand, was with the Sri Lankan minister of information, at his home. As a confidant of President Ranasinghe Premadasa, he was my stepping stone. I explained to him over dinner that my prime minister would be most grateful, and would ensure increased military assistance to his army, if Sri Lanka would agree to act as the conduit for the C-130s. The minister arranged for me to meet Premadasa at the presidential palace the next day. The first step of my mission had been accomplished.

The next morning I had a low key breakfast meeting with the PLO representative. Israel, I said, was willing to pay the Tamils $8 million if the PLO would help Iran to get the three captured soldiers out of the hands of the Shi'ite groups in Lebanon. Officially, the money was to be used by the

Continued on page 23

Letter to President Premadasa

ORA GROUP

22 July 1989
AZ-166-89
His Excellency R. Premadasa
President Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Subject: Proposal for sale of Five C-130 E Aircraft to the Sri Lankan Air Force
Your Excellency,

In two most interesting discussions I had with the Commander of your Air Force he showed great interest in C-130 E transport A/C for Sri Lanka. He said he would greatly support any reasonable proposal for such aircraft due to absolute necessity. The following is a proposal for sale of these A/C to the Sri Lankan Air Force directed to your Excellency in your capacity as Defence Minister.

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Ari Ben-Menashe
Director
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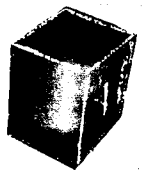

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THE SUB-CONTINENTAL SCENE

Delhi-Madras Rift Widens

MADRAS, May 23.

A series of baffling escapes by Sri Lankan Tamils, some of them militants and/or witnesses in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, held in prisons or special camps in Tamil Nadu has sparked a fresh round of verbal exchanges between the Central and State agencies and politicians.

More than 25 Sri Lankan militants and LTTE sympathisers have escaped from custody in recent months, including the two reported last week.

Of the two, one was Charles Nivaz, 27, of Jaffna, a witness in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, who escaped from the Saidapet sub-jail refugee camp on May 18 night.

Even as how he escaped remained a mystery, another Sri Lankan Tamil, Vijayakumar, 28, of Trincomalee, escaped from the special camp at Tiruchenduron May 22 morning.

The two incidents came as a jolt to the State police as it was only a few days ago armed men had forcibly freed three Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) detenus, all LTTE militants, from a police escort party at Mamandur near Madras.

As the Tamil Nadu police and Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Central Bureau of Investigation which probed Rajiv Gandhi's assassination started trading charges against each other for the escape of Charles – each said the detenu was under the control of the other – the Union Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, expressed concern over the escapes, and said that though the Centre had been advising the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, to take firm steps against the LTTE activists, she appeared to be 'vacillating' of late.

Such incidents were 'intriguing' when she herself was a target of the LTTE and the Centre had been extending maximum assistance for her safety and also to curb LTTE activities in the State, he said in Delhi.

That was enough cue for Tamil Nadu Congress(I) leaders, already hunting for Ms. Jayalalitha's head to mount a scathing attack on her. What Mr. Chavan said was 'one hundred per cent true', said the TNCC(I) president, Mr. K. Ramamurthi. He alleged that the escapes had occurred because of the 'support and connivance of the AIADMK Government' as 'the AIADMK leadership had entered into some kind of compromise with the LTTE' about which his party had already voiced concern.

Not to be outdone, Ms. Jayalalitha, in a lengthy statement, recorded her strong protest against 'the frivolous, damaging and unjust statement' of Mr. Chavan, and attributed it to the 'complete and wilful lack of appreciation of all the steps taken by the State Government to eradicate the menace of the LTTE.'

Ban on LTTE

While she was pressing the Prime Ministere for a ban on the LTTE, Ms. Jayalalitha said it was Mr. Chavan who had stated at Bidar on May 3, 1992 that the fact that the assassins of Rajiv Gandhi were members of the LTTE was not sufficient evidence to ban the organisation.

It was at her repeated insistence that the Centre finally decided to declare the LTTE as an unlawful assembly. Though she was instrumental for the ban, she said, for 'political reasons and ulterior motives there has been a concerted and well-orchestrated campaign over the past nine months to bring discredit to me and to attempt to destabilise my Government. Irresponsible politicians like Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, Mr. Vazhappadi Ramamurthy and Mr. S.R. Balasubramanian have been repeatedly heaping baseless charges against me,' alleging a secret pact between her and the LTTE.

She pointed out that Mr. Chavan himself, during his visit to Madras on November 10, 1992, had stated that the law and order problem in Tamil Nadu had been tackled satisfactorily.

Escape of Undertrials

She explained the prompt steps taken by the State Government in respect of the incidents of 'escapes' and said in the recent case in which three undertrial LTTE prisoners escaped in a shoot-out, she had appointed a Commission of Inquiry which should prove that she had not taken this matter casually or wished to act in any intriguing manner.

Asserting that she was against terrorism of all kinds, the Chief Minister said 'it is pertinent in this context to point out that no strong condemnation of the LTTE has ever come from the Prime Minister except for a recent terse statement that the 'LTTE must be curbed.'

Ms. Jayalalitha said: 'till now I have not received any letter from the Home Minister' on the recent escape of a Sri Lankan, Charles Nawaz, from the Saidapet special camp. On May 21, she said, Mr. Chavan spoke to her on the telephone and made certain enquiries. He also requested her to send him a report. 'Over the telephone, I explained to him the steps taken by my Government to deal with the two escapes that took place recently. However, before I could send him a letter, the Union Minister has chosen to go to the Press.'

Conspiracy Feared

The Chief Minister said there appeared to be a certain conspiracy in which the 'Congress(I), some politicians, the IB and the RAW are involved.' Yesterday, she recalled, while speaking to presspersons at the Madras airport she had said that there were no grounds for the dismissal of the State Government. 'But in the light of the subsequent developments which appear to be linked to certain recent incidents, it seems to me that a well orchestrated strategy is being evolved to put through, to prepare the ground for either the dismissal of the State Government or for placing the Legislative Assembly under suspended animation.'

Ms. Jayalalitha said by such statements as that of the Union Home Minister, 'they have wounded me deeply.' She said she expected the Union Home Minister to rise above petty party considerations and political vindictiveness. 'Unfortunately, he has shown himself to be incapable of doing so', she added.

In a statement issued in Delhi on May 23, Mr. Chavan, however dismissed as 'totally baseless' Ms. Jayalalitha's charge that he had suggested to her the possibility of holding negotiations with the LTTE. It was 'unfortunate' that Ms. Jayalalitha had chosen to give a 'totally false picture apparently to cover up her own position,' he said.

To which Ms. Jayalalitha's comment was: 'I stand by whatever I have said in my statement of May 22.'

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, has been exposed as a 'bundle of contradictions,' the DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, said today. He was commenting on her rejoinder to the criticism by the Union Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan.

He said that two years ago, Ms. Jayalalitha had raised the 'bogey of

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

the DMK supporting the LTTE' and, joining hands with the Congress(I), saw to the dismissal of the DMK Government. Now that the Congress(I) and the AIADMK had fallen out, each charged the other with supporting and allowing LTTE penetration in Tamil Nadu.

In 1990, Ms. Jayalalitha, in interviews to newspapers, had 'conceded' that nobody patronised the LTTE as the late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran, had done. Again, on the occasion of unveiling of a portrait of MGR in Madras – Rajiv Gandhi was sitting on the dais – she spoke urging the DMK Government in the State and the V.P. Singh Government at the Centre to support the militant outfit. She also said the people of Tamil Nadu should support the LTTE, Mr. Karunanidhi recalled.

(The Hindu.)

Tamil Nadu Governor Replaced

NEW DELHI, May 23. The Tamil Nadu Governor, Mr. Bhishma Narain Singh, resigned, and a mini-reshuffle of Governors was undertaken by the Centre today, the first in the two years since Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao became Prime Minister.

The President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, accepted Mr. Singh's resignation, and transferred Dr. M. Channa Reddy, Rajasthan Governor, to Tamil Nadu. the Haryana Governor, Mr. Dhanik Lal Mandal, has been asked to hold additional charge of Rajasthan until a successor to Dr. Reddy is found.

The Uttar Pradesh Governor, Mr. B. Satyanarayan Reddy, has been transferred to Orissa, where the Raj Bhavan post was lying vacant for some time. In his place, the President appointed Mr. Motilal Vora, Congress leader from Madhya Pradesh and former Chief Minister.

The changes in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh are deemed significant. There was a feeling here that the incumbent in the Raj Bhavan in Madras was just happy to let matters take their own course rather than keep the relationship between his office and that of the Chief Minister on an even keel.

That the Centre was not quite happy with Mr. Singh is clear from the fact that he has not been transferred to another State, though he was a Congress Minister before being picked for gubernatorial assignments.

Dr. Channa Reddy, replacement for Mr. Singh, is regarded as an astute and tough politician. He has been seen by the media as being 'overbearing' in the conduct of affairs in Jaipur. Governors are said to be especially happy when they work under President's rule or in dealing with relatively weak Chief Ministers.

While Ms. Jayalalitha is seen as being far from weak, she is under political pressure following the snapping of alliance between the AIADMK and the congress. This situation may suit Dr. Reddy's temperament well, it is pointed out, though no one in official positions here expects shenanigans leading up to Central rule in Tamil Nadu.

The Governor, Mr. Bhishma Narain Singh, had been feeling unhappy ever since the Congress(I)-AIADMK alliance fell apart and the two parties embarked on a collision course which in his view undermined the national interest and affected the security environment in Tamil Nadu.

According to sources close to Mr. Singh, even a couple of months ago he had expressed a desire to be moved out of Tamil Nadu when he found little scope for the political situation in the State to improve.

With tension building up between the Centre and the State Government, particularly the Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, on the LTTE issue which many thought was 'political', the Governor was feeling more and more uncomfortable. When he found it was no more easy for him to play the 'positive role as a vital link between the Centre and the State', he thought he should not continue in his present position.

The DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, said in Tiruchi, 'I am happy over the resignation' of Mr. Bhishma Narain Singh.

India to Outlaw Linking Politics with Religion

NEW DELHI, June 5 – In a controversial move to cripple the Hindu fundamentalist Opposition Bharatiya Janata party: (BJP) for its role in the demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya on December 6 last, the government of India is preparing legislation to delink religion from politics.

Presently under the consideration of Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao's government is a proposal to empower the Indian parliament to ban communal and other divisive organisations and enact a piece of legislation to bar political parties from using religion in elections.

The Rao cabinet discussed on May 23 a working paper entitled 'exploitation of religion for political purposes – means to curb.' Official sources said the ministers were asked to give their views on the suggestions made in it so that a comprehensive bill may be readied for introduction when parliament meets next month for its monsoon session.

The document suggests the effective enforcement and strengthening of existing legal provisions, delineating the role of the state in separating religion from politics, banning of religious organisations, and amendment to the constitution to ban associations, engaged in specified activities, changes in the representation of people's act 1951 and the unlawful activities (prevention) act, and non-registration of parties with religious names by the election commission.

In view of the spate of stay orders the central government had to face in the lower and High Court against its ban on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and four other 'communal' organisations in the wake of the demolition of the Babri mosque, it has been proposed that jurisdiction over such bans should be given solely to the Supreme Court 'to the exclusion of other courts,'

The note specifies that the power to ban disruptive organisations should not vest with the government but with parliament. It describes democracy and secularism as the 'two pillars' of the nation and 'basic features' of the constitution.

The exercise to formulate steps to deal with communal outfits in general and the BJP in particular was initiated by the prime minister in the wake of the destruction of the Babri mosque six months ago by a mob of unruly Hindu fanatics.

When Mr. Rao was lambasted in parliament for his government's failure to protect the Muslim shrine in Ayodhya, he had pledged to bring forth amendments to stop the misuse of religion for political purposes.

The cabinet has proposed an amendment to part III of the constitution, relating to fundamental rights, to define secularism and to commit the Indian State to take all necessary measures to separate religion from politics.

Continued from page 19

Tamils for 'humanitarian purposes' although we were both aware it would go to the purchase of weapons from the PLO.

Back at the hotel that evening, I spotted Leon Siff dancing on his own again. When he saw me, he left the dance floor and made his way over. He asked how my day had been and where I had gone, but I dodged the topic. Then he turned the subject around to money.

'Ari', he said, 'my group needs all the support it can get. I know you can help. I'd like you to come to the US some time and see what we do. How about it?'

'Sure', I said, 'if I'm in Los Angeles, I'll look you up.'

In the next 48 hours I met the president, the commander of the Sri Lankan Air Force, and the PLO representative, nudging them all along toward the execution of the Israeli plan to sell the C-130s in exchange for the three soldiers. I still had to meet the Tamils, even though contact had been made with their London office, to arrange their payment. Of course, this part of the deal was unknown to the Sri Lankan government.

Trip to Jaffna

My journey to Jaffna was not the most relaxed. I had decided to drive myself because I didn't want any witnesses to my movements or negotiations. The narrow road took me through numerous roadblocks set up by either the Sri Lankan Army or the Indian Army. The Indians were highly suspicious of a 'tourist' heading north to Jaffna at a time when the rebels were active. But after a great deal of argument they allowed me to proceed, even though the area north had been designated as a military operations zone.

That night, as previously arranged through the PLO representative, I was picked up at the Subhi Hotel in Jaffna and driven to a Tamil village. My guide took me to a large house where teenage boys stood guard, each holding a Kalashnikov rifle. I was ushered inside, where a number of men were waiting in the stark light of a propane lamp. Their leader, whose codename was Tiger One, spoke reasonably good English and introduced himself and his compatriots. I was a sitting duck for their propaganda, but it had to be done.

Tiger One, a middle-aged, short, chubby, dark-complexioned man, paced the room as he informed me there were 50 million Tamils on the Indian mainland in Tamil Nadu, and they were all very unhappy with the way they had been treated by Rajiv Gandhi and his Congress Party. Gandhi had created a pro-Indian front in Sri Lanka, and he wanted to annex the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka to India.

'He has become a bully,' Tiger one snapped. 'He even wants the top part of Sri Lanka – our homeland. Well, let us tell you that Rajiv Gandhi will pay for his heavy-handedness. We will continue our struggle for independence to the last man. We will fight whatever and whomever they throw at us.'

I explained that I was there to make a contribution to their cause. The Tamil leader was quick to point out that the Israeli government might well be offering them $8 million, but the Israelis were also assisting the Sri Lankan Army against the Tamils. They conceded, however, they needed the money. I explained it was ransom for the three soldiers, but I didn't tell them about the C-130s that were going to Iran as well.

My hosts and I struck a deal. They would accept the money from Israel, and they would contact the PLO mission in Colombo informing them of the arrangement. Hopefully, we could then expect PLO assistance in trying to secure the release of our soldiers.

The return journey to Colombo was horrendous. Inevitably, the car broke down, and I ended up being towed, sleeping in the car, and finding myself at the point of a gun as a gang of Tamil road bandits demanded money.

Back in the capital, I phoned Nick Davies and told him to go ahead. This was our prearranged signal for him to make the $8 million payment to the Tamils through their London office. Naturally, the money came out of a Slush-fund account.

I flew back to Israel, right into a storm. The talks with the PLO had been leaked, I found out, by Rabbi Ovadia Yusef, leader of the Shas Party, who had himself had discussions about the Palestinian question with Arab leaders. Some coalition members were furious. Shamir was on the receiving end of their anger, and he realized he had to be seen to be backing out of his commitment. He needed scapegoats.

I guessed what was coming and decided to stay one step ahead. I consulted the other two signatories to the slush-fund accounts, and persuaded them that for the physical and financial protection of everyone who'd been on the Joint Committee, we should move the CIA money now controlled by Israel to the East Bloc.

The CIA money, by now up to $710 million, went into the East on a series of straightforward transfers, without using Maxwell's companies as a conduit. the move left Maxwell dangling. The banks that had lent him money in 1988 no longer had their guarantees. Shamir was furious that his friend had been left in such a vulnerable position, and he had to conduct a swift public relations exercise with the banks to ensure they continued to shore Maxwell up.

In early fall 1989, Shamir called me into his office. He was sitting behind his desk, his tiny body dwarfed in the large leather chair. I stood in silence staring into his severe face. This was to be the showdown.

'You have got too close to our enemies,' he said.

'If you're talking about the PLO contacts, you know I was only following orders. And we couldn't back off anyway. I have personally promised the families of those soldiers that we will do all we can to help them.'

'You exceeded your authority.' His face was like a stone, cold and grey. 'And what about the money?' he asked. 'Are you stealing it?'

An old Hebrew saying came into my head. *'Ganav ganav patur,'* I said. 'A thief from a thief is off the hook.'

Continued on page 24

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Opposition Move to Abolish Executive Presidency

The Opposition in Sri Lanka will shortly present to Parliament a proposal to 'fundamentally change the Executive Presidential character of the constitution', SLFP General Secretary Dharmasiri Senanayake MP, said recently.

The SLFP general secretary said the opposition initiative follows the readiness indicated by President D.B. Wijetunga just before the provincial council elections to discuss possible reforms to the presidential system. He said the opposition parties were confident many UNP parliamentarians would support the opposition proposal.

Mr. Senanayake said the Peoples' Alliance and the DUNF were jointly engaged in drafting the proposed amendment. In this regard, said Mr. Senanayake, the Opposition had already consulted several constitutional experts including some prominent lawyers and university dons.

The proposed amendment, in addition to transferring powers from the executive presidency to parliament will also focus on changes to the sytem of proportional representation, Mr. Senanayake said. The PR system had in some ways proven a failure as seen in the large number of spoilt votes amounting to about ten per cent of the votes polled, in the recent elections, he pointed out.

Asked whether the Opposition would support any move by government to allow parliamentarians and provincial councillors and other elected members to cross over to other political parties without losing his or her seat, Mr. Senanayake said the freedom of private members too would be provided for in the proposed amendment. But that provision alone should not be singled out for amending as that alone would not be of any use to the country so long as the authoritarian character of the constitution remained unchanged, he warned.

Mr. Senanayake said the PA and DUNF had made a comprehensive comparative study of constitutions in other countries with special reference to the powers and functions of the head of state, freedom of elected members, electoral system and system of representation. Among the countries whose constitutions had been so far studied with a view to borrowing certain features are India, Germany and Sweden, Mr. Senanayake said. The Opposition will propose the establishment of a national election commission in Sri Lanka as in India with adequate powers to carry out electoral affairs. The Opposition draft will ensure that the proposed amendment would suit the local conditions, he said.

Asked whether the PR system would be repealed by the amendment, Mr. Senanayake said it had to be considerably altered and in this regard special attention would be paid to the German model where there was in practice both the PR system as well as the single constituency system.

Continued from page 23

He glared at me for a moment. Then with a flick of his hand he dismissed me. 'Lech! – Go' he ordered. I went. I knew him well enough to know that this was not the end of the affair.

Shamir's 1989 secret peace plan, from which he was now trying to extricate himself, never got anywhere. Infighting in the cabinet effectively ended any contact between the PLO and Shamir's office. King Hussein, through his own intelligence network, heard about the plan to unseat him and took precautionary steps. He aligned himself even more closely with Saddam Hussein and extracted a promise that the Iraqi leader would help the king if there were an uprising in Jordan.

The Americans, meanwhile, kept up the pressure on Shamir. They joined in full chorus with Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq, and insisted that the West Bank and Gaza Strip should be the new Palestinian state. The King of Jordan had also officially relinquished any responsibility for the Palestinians or for the West Bank and said he would no longer be interested in any negotiations over a Jordanian-Palestinian federation. This was the situation when the US finally fell out with Saddam Hussein in August 1990 and decided it needed to establish its own military presence in the region.

When Saddam Hussein clashed with the US in early 1991, the Palestinian populace all over the world suddenly started seeing him as their hero. Here was an Arab leader fighting single handedly against USA imperialism. Arafat had no choice but to show public support for Iraq against the United States. The King of Jordan, whose loyalties were divided, did not know where to turn at first, but then decided to lean toward Saddam Hussein and show the Palestinians that he was also a protector of the Arab cause. The Syrians, however, who were anti-Saddam Hussein, suddenly changed sides and went to the Americans.

As events were to prove, when the Gulf War ended in Ireaq's defeat and the loss of tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers, Arafat lost his standing. His money sources from Saudi Arabia and other gulf states were cut off, and what little credibility he'd built up in the West was nullified. The King of Jordan, even though he had backed Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War, quickly returned to the US fold. The Syrians, for their cooperation in the Gulf War, were given control over Lebanon, Israel found itself back in one of the most difficult diplomatic situations possible, in which the Americans were saying the 'moderate' Palestinians and not the PLO were to be involved in negotiations with Israel over the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

All the covert negotiations between Likud and the PLO leadership in 1988 and 1989 went down the drain. A real attempt to solve the Palestinian question, without threatening the existence of the State of Israel, was again aborted by the Americans and their friends.

Access to ICRC

Police and others in charge of detention centres have been instructed by the Inspector General of Police to co-operate with members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) when they seek to visit persons in custody.

According to the new guidelines issued by the IGP, the ICRC would have access to all detention centres which were permanent or temporary, civilian and military, and the guidelines would apply to prisons, barracks, police stations and transit centres. The ICRC should also be allowed to visit the entire premises of the detention centres if they so wished. Previously there had been complaints that the ICRC officers were very often not allowed access to certain parts of the detention centres which remained prohibited.

Under the new guidelines, officers in charge of police stations and other detention centres would be expected to supply the ICRC delegates with a list of detainees together with their names, ages, dates of arrest and districts. The ICRC delegates would be able to determine the material and psychological conditions of detainees, and look into how the detainees had been treated while in custody.

READERS FORUM

TIME AND PLACE FOR VIOLENCE

'Peace on earth, goodwill to men' is a saying redolent with the spiritual idealism of humankind. There is also the comforting assertion that the 'meek will inherit the earth', despite the fact that many of the innocent primitive tribes have vanished from the face of the earth, mostly through slaughter or eviction. Violence has a place in life, and this cannot be denied, and it is, its time place and need that must be considered. This is not to condone violence and its deplorable consequences but the admission of a cold fact of reality. It is a characteristic of nature for survival and evolution of both animals and humans, in time and place. One is reminded of the phrase 'nature is red in tooth and claw' denoting the constant killing that goes on in the animal world. It is the means, whereby nature ensures the survival of the fittest, the control of numbers, the weeding of the unfit, and the vigor and health of the species.

Violence has also a place in human evolution as denoted in the incessant struggles between the conqueror and the conquered, the predator and the victim, the oppressor and the oppressed, and the struggle for a place in the sun – land and food. Despite racial affinity, the Red Indian tribes had ever been at war with each other thereby developing the qualities needed for existence and the vigor of the group. Even in the case of the ancient civilizations, despite the claims of the golden ages of peace and prosperity, it was the custom of warrior kings to wage wars of conquest, thus compelling the other to develop their own prowess to withstand and evolve. The Roman Empire in a period of long peace, turned to sloth and corruption which nature's remedy of marauding vandals descended to reverse.

In nearer times, one is reminded of the 'Wars of the Roses' which flared intermittently for 30 years, and the incessant conflicts that in time brought high technical achievements. This enabled Europe to dominate the world. The hallmarks of the struggles for independence and uplift, has been violent conflicts, and so was it in the struggle of labour for rights. A noted Black leader, Fredrick Douglas asserted 'The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims have been born of earnest struggle. If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favour freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without ploughing up the ground – they want rain without the thunder and the lightning. They want the ocean without the roar of its many waters.' It is also true that such could be won with the courage of a Gandhi, but few mortals are capable of it – and least by the self seeking individuals who feed on the efforts of others.

It is in this context, that the struggle of the Tamils to dignity and rights must be viewed. Many have bemoaned the fact that India and Sri Lanka had achieved independence without a struggle, and thereby its real benefits neither appreciated nor achieved. The dubious negotiations of political self seekers could never have conditioned the Tamils to generate the spirits of sacrifice, courage, and endurance to fight against heavy odds. The ongoing struggle, however painful and devastating, has inured the Tamils to sacrifice and joint endeavour for survival. One is reminded of the contemptuous Sinhala epithet 'Para Demala' aimed at the past docility of the Tamils, and the continued exploitation of the Indian labourers in the hill country. Respect must be earned and proved and it is now unlikely that the Tamils would be viewed with scorn.

It may not be denied that the subsequent efforts of the Government to ensure the security of the Tamils in the South, from pillage rape and killing, which they suffered in 1983, was primarily due to the heavy price exacted by the militants. For the death of 13 soldiers, Tamils paid a heavy price in thousands being killed, maimed or driven from their homes. Now despite the frequent killings of hundreds of soldiers, neither the Sinhalese thugs, nor the Government has sought to intimidate. Nor can the present willingness to even talk of a political settlement, be ascribed to a change of heart, but for the pressure of an unending war. It may be consoling or easy for some Tamils to claim a change of heart or a new found love, but the persistent endeavour of the Government to impose a military solution together with a merciless blockade, belie such assumptions,

It may also be noted that the word 'negotiations' is irrelevant in talks between unequals. Negotiations has only meaning when there is some basis of strength in each party. It is this that is conducive to meaningful negotiations, and the 'middlemen' who have often come forward to mediate, must thank the supreme sacrifices of the youth, for even being heard.

The above should certainly not be construed as an encouragement or incentive to violence, heedless of the utter desperation and havoc suffered by the Tamils. It is but a statement of reality that violence has a time and need depending on circumstances. This should not be lost sight of by those who pontificate on abilities to achieve results by mere talk. No doubt violence has a time and place, and must naturally be followed by peace and goodwill. Violence is but the ploughing up the soil for crops to grow. The agony of the Tamils may yet be prolonged further straining their courage and sacrifice, but hopefully the day will come, on the basis of mutual respect earned with blood and tears, and this could be the base for real peace for years to come. To display weakness and lack of resolve, can only prolong the agony, and nullify the sacrifice of the flower of Tamil youth. The prize is ever for the courageous and the steadfast. Idealism is all very well, but realities cannot be ignored. May the toil, sacrifices and blood shed by the Tamils up to now, suffice to usher in peace, with dignity and rights.

T. Balasingham,
14 Norbury Crescent,
Scarborough,
Ontario M1P 3J6.

THE GOOD AND THE BAD

I was appalled by the anti-Hindu drivel you had published in the name of peace, contributed by Charles R.A. Hoole (*Tamil Times*, April 1993). He complains that 'one of the strongest ideas which the puranas and the epic convey is the notion that evil doers will ultimately be destroyed by good people, even with the aid of violence.' What is wrong with this universal theme? Has he ever read the Bible? I can quote quite a number of passages which dwell on the same theme. Just a sampling is given below:

1. 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God' (Psalm 9:17).

2. 'Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man; seek out his wickedness till thou find none' (Psalm 10:15).

3. 'Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup' (Psalm 11:6).

4. 'I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed' (Psalm 18:37).

5. 'I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet' (Psalm 18:38).

Continued on page 29

CLASSIFIED ADS

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MATRIMONIAL

Uncle *seeks for professionally employed Engineer nephew, with M.Sc., Canadian landed immigrant, non-smoker, 28, no encumbrances and no malefics in horoscope, suitable Tamil Hindu partner. Must be prepared to live in Canada. Send photo, horoscope, educational and other details. All correspondence treated confidentially and replied/returned. M 662 c/o Tamil Times.*

Reputable Jaffna parents *seek qualified girl with good family background for their US citizen son, 34, computer professional, holding Masters degree, enjoying reputable position. Horoscope immaterial. M 663 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu cousin *seeks professional groom for accomplished graduate teacher, 34, doing postgraduate studies. M 664 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu doctor *seeks professional partner for sister, 26, fair, 5'3", CIMA partly qualified, living in UK with parents. Send horoscope, details. M 665 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek fair, pretty, professionally qualified bride for their doctor son, 31, working in States. Send details, photo, horoscope. M 666 c/o Tamil Times.*

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

Srikanth *son of Mr. & Mrs. V. Thangarajah of 7 Fraser Street, Wentworthville, Sydney, Australia and* **Tharani** *daughter of Mr. & Mrs. R. Ruthiramoorthy of 24 Martin Street, Lidcombe, Sydney, Australia on 28th November 1992 at Cherrybrook Community Centre, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook.*

Andrew *John Jones and* **Leela** *daughter of Dr. & Mrs. K. Sivaloganathan of 18 Eton Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 5AL on 22nd May 1993 at Rutlish School Hall, London SW19.*

Remy *son of Anton and Angeline Machado of Hendela, Sri Lanka and* **Marylou Gowrikumari** *daughter of Sarojini & Richards Karunairajan of Sithankerny, Sri Lanka on 22nd May '93 at the Church of Master, 3385 Lawrence Avenue East, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada.*

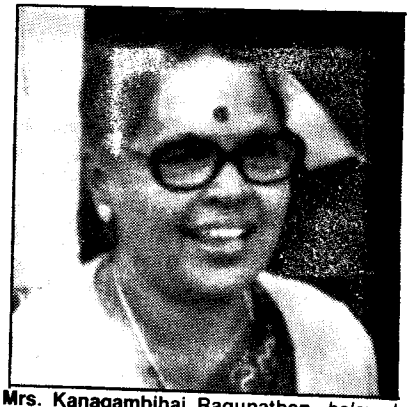
Wanted

Comfortable bedsit with cooking facilities for a couple and child in small family home close to tube station for a month from 15th July '93. E 60 c/o Tamil Times.

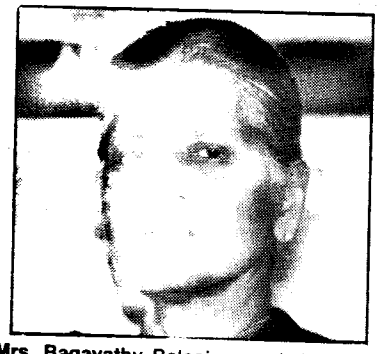
OBITUARIES

Dr. S.J.P. Ariaraj, *Consultant Anaesthetist, Wordsley Hospital, Stourbridge, West Midlands; dearly beloved husband of Sukhanthini; loving daddy of Laxman, Sumitren and Rajiv; son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Periathamby of Chundikuli, Jaffna; son-in-law of the late Mr. T. Samuel-Thambiah and of Mrs. I. Samuel-Thambiah of U.K. passed away on 19.1.93. Funeral took place at St. Mary's Church, Oldswinford, Stourbridge on 26.1.93. We remember with love, and thank all our friends and relations who attended his funeral, sent messages of sympathy, generously supported the Renal Unit Fund in his memory and helped in many many ways during our time of sorrow. We regret we are unable to thank them individually – Mrs. Ariaraj and family, 231 Hagley Road, Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 2JP.*

Dr. Thirunavukkarasu Thiruchelvam *(General Medical Practitioner, Ipswich England); loving son of the late Mr. & Mrs. T. Thirunavukkarasu (Sri Lanka); dearly beloved husband of Yogamalar (Ipswich); loving and proud father of Selvakumar (London); Sujeevan (Leeds) and Nikesh (London); loving and proud father-in-law of Angeeta (Luton); loving brother of Selvaranee (Sydney) Mangaleswary (Sydney) and Subadhra (Colombo); brother-in-law of Ruthrarajan (London), Indrarajan (Dubai) and Ravindran (Toronto), passed away peacefully, aged 54 years on 13th May 1993 at Ipswich Hospital. He will be greatly missed and always remembered with affection. Funeral took place on 18th May 1993 at his home, 90 Cliff Lane, Ipswich, IP3 0PJ. We thank all for their overwhelming support and sympathy during this time of grief.*

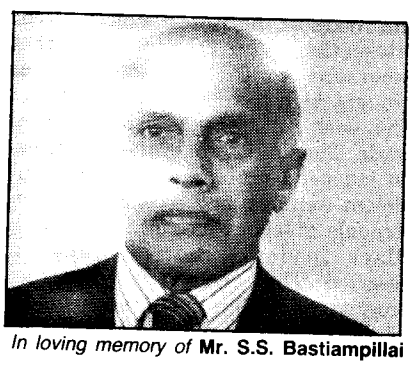


Mrs. Kanagambihai Ragunathan, *beloved wife of Mr. S.P. Ragunathan (Ragu), Retired Town Overseer, P.W.D., Badulla, presently of Canada; daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Kandiah of Mallakam, Sri Lanka; loving mother of Sri Kantha (Canada); mother-in-law of Sagunthala; grandmother of Visvakanthan; sister of Mrs. Kanagaluxmi Thirunavukkarasu of Mallakam, Sri Lanka and the late Manickavasagar (Teacher, Central College, Jaffna); sister-in-law of Mrs. Puvaneswari Nadarajah, Rajanathan, Paramanathan (all of Canada), Pathmanathan (U.K.), passed away on 10th June 1993. Funeral took place in Toronto on 14.6.93 – 173 Mammoth Hall Trail, Scarborough, Ontario M1B 1P8, Canada. Tel: (416) 754 2521.*



Mrs. Bagavathy Balasingam, *beloved wife of the late Thambimuttu Balasingham (Attorney-at-Law, Badulla, Sri Lanka); loving mother of B. Balaraman (Solicitor, U.K.) and B. Aurobindo (Oklahoma, U.S.A.); mother-in-law of Mallika Devi and Myriam and grandmother of Priyadharshini and Natasha expired under tragic circumstances in Colombo on 13th June 1993. Funeral took place on 18.6.93. – 62 Eversleigh Road, East Ham, London E6 1HQ. Tel: 081-470 2371.*

IN MEMORIAM

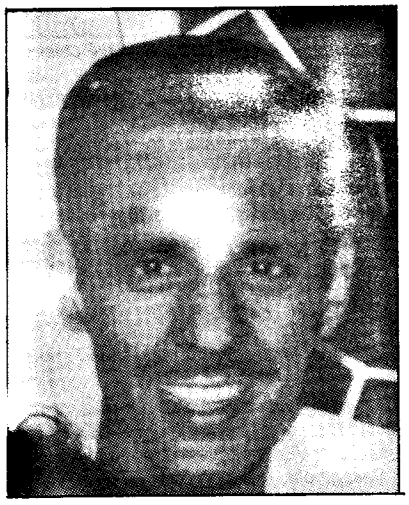


In loving memory of **Mr. S.S. Bastiampillai**

on the fifth anniversary of his passing away on 14th June 1988.

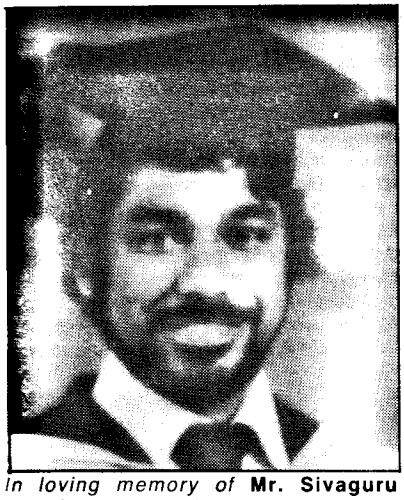
You were a great man
So noble and great
Whom we all miss
And will never forget.

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his loving wife Ruby; children Vinothini, Pathmini and Rajan; grandchildren Tilan, Arosha, Sumithra and Julian. – 24 Woodend Avenue, South Harrow, Middx. HA2 8NX, U.K.



In everloving memory of Mr. B. Sivaganathan *on the second anniversary of his passing away on 22.6.91.*

Remembered with love and affection by his step mother Mrs. Rajaletchumy Balasubramaniam; wife Kamala; brothers Dr. Sivaloganathan, Thirunavukkarasu, Radhakrishnan and Sritharan; sisters Mrs. Gowri Pathmanathan, Mrs. Bhagawathy Mohanadas, Mrs. Mangayarkkarasi Jetheendran and Mrs. Jayanthi Kumaranayagam – 9 Upton Close, Park Street, St. Albans, Herts, U.K. Tel: 0737 873537.



In loving memory of **Mr. Sivaguru Mahadevan** *on the first anniversary of his passing away on 5th June 1992.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his beloved wife Jayanthi; loving children Kalaivani, Gajan and Haran; mother Mrs. Selvapakiam Sivaguru; brothers Pathmanathan and Dr. Ganeshan; sisters Mrs. Jayesary Narendra and Mrs. Vimaladevi Thyagarajah – 31 Tamarisk Gardens, Bittern Park, Southampton SO2 4RA.

In loving memory of **Mrs. Ponnamma Kandavanam** *on the first anniversary of her passing away on 23.6.92.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by her children Thirupathy, Thanapathy, Pathma, and Sivapakiam; sons-in-law Nadarajah, Balasubramaniam, Dr. Thangarajah and Nagaratnam; daughter-in-law Tharmarani; grandchildren Mrs. Kumuthini Gnanakumaran, Mrs. Suganthini Navendhra, Shanthini, Amuthini, Jeyanthini, Thasintha, Shantha, Jamuna, Anula, Nalina, Thayalini, Sivandevi, Sivakumar, Sivaselvan, Sivaselvi and Sivathasan – 57B Days Lane, Biddenham, Beds., U.K.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

June 26 *7.00pm* **Vembadi Old Girls' Association (U.K.)** *presents* **Summer Dinner Dance** *at Lola Jones Hall, Tooting Leisure Centre, Greaves Place off Garratt Lane, Tooting, London SW17 0NE. Tel: 081-647 9069/349 1172.*

June 27 *6.30pm* **SCOT** *presents* **Carnatic Vocal Recital** *by* **Shri O.S. Thiagarajan** *at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL. Tel: 081-764 7912/870 9897/468 7181 & 0277 223981.*

July 1st *Pirathosham.*

July 3 *Full Moon, St. Thomas Day.*

July 3 *10.00am to 11.30pm* **Jaffna Hindu College Old Boys' Association** *presents* **Annual Get Together** *with Sports, Dinner, Dance and Cultural Entertainment at Rutlish School, Watery Lane, Merton Park, London SW20 9AD.*

July 9 Launching of book The Ethical Essence of the Tamils *by Mr. S. Sriskandarajah, at the Assembly Hall, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London E17.*

July 11 *6.30pm* **London Meihandan Aadheenam** *presents* **Carnatic Vocal Recital** *by* **'Sangeetha Vani' Smt. Nageswary Brahmananda** *at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1 4RL. Tel: 0277 223981/081-531 6435.*

July 15 *Ekathasi.*

July 17 *Pirathosam. 6.30pm* **M.I.O.T.** *presents 'Kalai Vizha' in aid of Tamil refugees in Sri Lanka and South India at Copeland Community School, Wembley, Middx., Tel: 081-342 0330/904 1789.*

July 19 *Adi Amavasai. 5.30pm. Speech Day of London Tamil Institute at Wembley High School Hall, East Lane, Wembley, Middx.*

July 22 *Sathurthi.*

July 23 *Adi Pooram.*

July 29 *Ekathasi.*

July 30 *Pirathosam.*

July 31 *St. Ignatius Day.*

July 31 *6.30pm* **Tamil Performing Arts Society** *celebrates* **its 15th Anniversary** *with* **'Ganasakaram',** *a musical extravaganza at Riverdale Hall, Rennell Street, Lewisham, London SE13 Tel: 081-459 4335/470 7883.*

At the Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 071 381 3086/4608.

July 3, 17 & 31. *5.30pm Lecture on* **Mahabharata** *by* **Sri Mathoor Krishnamurthi.**

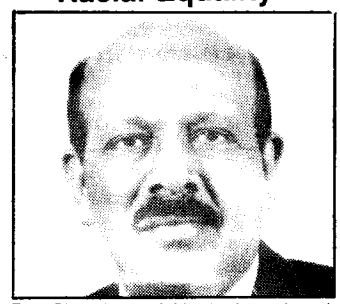
July 3 *7.00pm A talk on 'The Relevance of Bhagavad Gita to Modern Life' by* **Swami Swaroopananda.**

July 17 *7.00pm* **Bharata Natyam** *by* **Lakshmi & Parawathy,** *disciples of Smt Alamel Valli.*

July 18 *7.00pm* **Hindustani Vocal** *by* **Sharad Sathe.**

August 7 & 8 Carnatic Vocal *by the legendary singer* **Sri Bala Murali Krishna.**

Dr. Raj Chandran Appointed to Commission of Racial Equality



Dr. Raj Chandran of Nottingham has been appointed to the Commission of Racial Equality by the British Home Office. The Commission has an annual budget of £15 million and has the power to investigate allegations of discrimination on grounds of race.

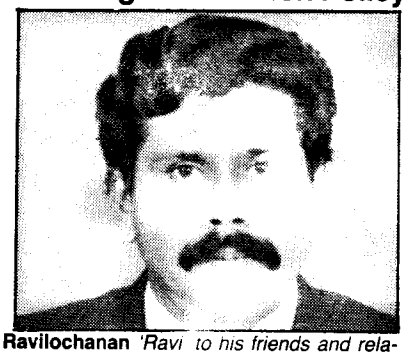
Dr. Chandran was a District Councillor and a Conservative Parliamentary Candidate. He is President of the League of Friends of the University of Jaffna.

London Ambulance Service Organise Medical Aid for North & East Sri Lanka

A group of Doctors require assistance in setting up a medical aid programme for the children of North and East Sri Lanka due to outbreaks of Rabies and Malaria. It is planned to train local health workers to vaccinate and give injections in preventive medicine and also perform other health care procedures in the outlying villages. This organisation is strictly non-sectarian and non-political. Its only interest is in providing medical aid training and relief where ever called upon to do so. It is an open membership and welcomes members of all nationalities and religious beliefs.

Any medical personnel willing to be involved, or to support us, would be most welcome. Contributions for vaccines urgently required. For further information please contact: **Mr. Peter Kingsley-Ducane, Room B 10, The Basement Aid Room, London Ambulance Service, 220 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8SD. Tel: 071-633 9124 (Daytime) or 0689 835823 (6 to 8pm)**

Ravi Bags £5.5 Million Policy



Ravilochanan *'Ravi to his friends and relatives arrived in Britain with his family from India five years ago. In 1988 when he came to live in Croydon he knew no one in Britain. He embarked on the sometimes soul-destroying job of selling financial services, in which knowing people has been looked upon as an important prerequisite. However Ravi has made a roaring success of his profession by selling for his firm,* **NM Financial Management** *of Park Street, Croydon, its biggest insurance policy of £5.5 million.*

Ravi won the confidence of those he canvassed leading to a coveted high achiever's award in his first year. Now as a seasoned salesman and sales manager, he spends considerable time training new recruits.

A modest self-effacing man, he believes that a change of attitude is necessary in his industry and immediate advice should be available to those in financial difficulty. He feels that the industry spends too much time and money appealing to the basic greed of new recruits telling them how much success they can achieve at the outset, thus sometimes raising unrealistic expectations and always running the risk of attracting the wrong kind of people. He emphasises the professional aspect of the industry, in which people trust the insurance salesman and reveal personal financial details and expect impartial advice in return. Of course he has to sell insurance, but not to the detriment of his client.

Ravi's advice to those who aspire to his own success is that it would be wise to recommend investments only to those clients who could comfortably afford it. In some cases it may mean no investment at all. It may be disappointing at that time, but clients appreciate the salesman's honesty and come back when times get better. In the meantime many of them recommend their friends.

Ravi is the only son of the Tamil scholar and pioneer of Tamil broadcasting in Britain, Mr. S. Sivapathasundaram and the carnatic musician of yesteryear, Mrs. Gnanatheepam Sivapathasundaram.

Airlanka Increases Flights to South India

Airlanka has recently increased its frequencies between Colombo and South India to 14 flights a week. There are **daily** *flights to* **Madras, 5 flights** *a week to* **Trivandrum** *and* **2** *to* **Tiruchinapalli.**

Airlanka has good connections with its four London flights, and where there are no immediate connections, an alternative with Indian Airlines to Madras and Trivandrum is offered.

With the recent delivery of Airlanka's second Airbus A320, all flights from Colombo to South India as well as Bombay and Delhi are now operated with the new aircraft.

An Appreciation

The demise of **Mr. Sithamparapillai, affectionately known as Ponniah Master,** *who all his career was teacher and late principal at Arunodaya College, Alaveddy, Sri Lanka is mourned equally so by his family, his relations, his old students, his countrymen and very importantly by his friends who adored him. As a teacher he excelled many in the profession and was highly respected and honoured by all his associates in Jaffna and outside. Ponniah Master could be approached by anyone for help and advice in regard to their problems. His learning, his knowledge, his experience and his nature invariably found some solutions for them all. He was very honourable, most unassuming and unobtrusive in his actions.*

As a gentleman he was a jewel and rarely can you find another of his calibre. He was my teacher and later my friend and guide who always addressed me as 'Dear brother'. I was proud of him and will miss him for all times. may you 'Dear Brother', find eternal peace.

T. Mylvaganam, (formerly of the Australian Trade Commission, Colombo)

16/88 Albert Road,
Strathfield 2135,
Australia.

Vice President of India Visits U.K. Bhavan Centre

H.E. Shri K.R. Narayanan greets teachers of the Bhavan

'Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru used to say that whenever India opened itself and gave generously to the rest of the world of its culture, its thoughts and ideas, India became a great country. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is doing a tremendous job in this vital task through its multi-faceted and profound work' said the Vice-President of India, His Excellency, Shri K.R. Narayanan during his visit to the Bhavan's U.K. centre on 13.5.93, accompanied by his wife Smt Usha Narayanan.

Dr. L.M. Singhvi, High Commissioner for India in U.K. and a patron of the Bhavan welcomed the distinguished visitors. Shri Maneck Dalal chairman of the Bhavan's U.K. centre proposed the vote of thanks.

Sakunthalam Drama in Tamil

The histrionic talent among the little children of South London Tamil School, Croydon, was once again displayed at a Cultural Evening on 16th May last when they staged Kalidasa's masterpiece Sakunthalam in Tamil. Those who had watched the Ramayana productions by the same school last year would have found a difference: this time the entire play was narrated and acted by kids aged between four and eleven. It was heartwarming to watch the children speaking spotless Tamil with innocent confidence and remarkable feeling. The production is the first part of two, the second and final part is to be staged sometime later this year.

Beginning with the enticing dance of the celestial Menaka, sent by Indra to disrupt the penance of Viswamitra and the resultant birth of Sakunthala, the story continues with the finding of the baby girl by a riverside by Rishi Kanvar who entrusts her with Gauthami, matron of his Ashram. Sakunthala grows up among the sylvan surroundings, playing with birds and animals and her two close companions, Anusuya and Priyamvatha. Kanvar Rishi, foreseeing some calamity to befall on Sakunthala, departs to do penance at Kapila Hills. Here ends the first episode.

It was a wonderful experience to watch the kids with tucked up veshti and brahminical thread and girls in rural attire dancing merrily. The scene where Kanvar takes leave of them the little ones showed their emotion so realistically that the entire audience was seen to wipe their own tears. Every child acted brilliantly and the little girl who took the part of Sakunthala was superb.

Among the other items of the Cultural Evening were vocal music, violin, veena, mridangam and individual dance performances. A Pinnal Kolattam (Maypole Dance) by a group of eight little children was very attractive and perfectly executed. Outstanding was a dance drama entitled 'Bhaktharin Kanavu', a dream fantasy depicting the craving of devotees to have the dharsan of the Almighties and eventual appearance of the Three, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva with their consorts in the dream of the Bhakthas. The scene, acting and the dance choreography were of a very high standard.

The South London Tamil School children's cultural standard is seen to have grown tremendously in recent years. The school which runs into its tenth year hopes to celebrate the coming anniversary with exciting cultural events.

– Espiyes.

Private Tuition
Pure/Applied Mathematics, Statistics, Physics O/A Level, Homes visited.
Tel: 081-864 3227

Continued from page 16

The Tigers for some reason came to believe that a section of the militarists around Premadasa were making ulterior moves to create conditions which would ultimately make him see common cause with India against the LTTE.

It was also clear to them that India had stopped orchestrating the belief that Premadasa would ultimately betray the interests of the army by adopting a soft approach towards the Tigers and that Delhi was very keen to please Premadasa and win him over.

The Tigers had to make a quick move before the Colombo Delhi rapprochement was cemented by Premadasa and his 'hawkish' advisors.

The rejection of LTTE's ceasefire in 1991 and the role of the Select Committee are two more factors that have to be reviewed in the aftermath of Premadasa's death.

When the LTTE's unilateral ceasefire on January 1, 1991 was rejected by the government the Tigers believed that Ranjan Wijeratne and the military had overruled Premadasa who had wanted to reciprocate the Tiger's ceasefire. 'The government policy makers were unable to grasp the dangers and pitfalls of extending the war deep into the Tamil territory. Caught up in this bellicose attitude, the Sri Lankan Government made a disastrous mistake in rejecting a peace gesture proposed by the LTTE at the beginning of the year 1991.'

'The LTTE's peace initiative was misconceived by the government as an attempt to seek a breathing space to regroup and reorganize. The military hierarchy assumed the LTTE was weak and that it was the right time to strike. The government rejected the peace offer and proposed unfair and unacceptable terms and conditions which amounted to nothing less than total surrender', observes 'Adele Anne' in an English book put out by the LTTE in Jaffna early this year, (***Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers – released by the Publication Section of LTTE, Jaffna, 1.1.1993 p.69).***

However, it appears that the LTTE became alarmed when Premadasa began to make use of the Select Committee process to muster support among a few Tamil representatives in the East to seek Western sanctions to create the appropriate political and social conditions in the Eastern province to facilitate the consolidation of the army's military gains in this region and thereby enable the security forces to withdraw sufficient troops from there to hit Jaffna. The LTTE came to see the whole Select Committee process as an insidious design by Premadasa which was an integral component of a large military strategy aimed at defeating them.

Four days before Premadasa was blown up, the ***Eelanatham***, argued that the Premadasa government 'is keenly involving itself only in finding a military solution' (26-4-93).

Although bumbling at many a turn the LTTE could see that Premadasa was making some moves in the right direction – a dangerous direction. Anyone familiar with the history of the LTTE will know that Prabhakaran rarely bothers himself with clever counter moves. He just checkmates.

Jaffna Central Makes it Four in a Row

On a cool but dry Bank Holiday Monday May 31st, Jaffna Central College made it four in a row when they beat Nalanda College Colombo in a nail biting finish of the 5th Annual Sri Lankan Cricket Festival held at the Maori Club grounds, Worcester Park, Surrey to clinch the O.B.A. Festival Challenge Trophy for the fourth year in succession.

A record number of fourteen schools participated this year and comprised of St. Anthony's, Colombo Hindu, Trinity, Jaffna Hindu, St. Thomas, Ananda, Zahira, Nalanda, St. Johns Jaffna, Mahinda, St. Peters, St. Josephs and Royal.

Play got under way on three separate pitches at 9.30am and at 11.00am the Festival was declared open by the Deputy High Commissioner for Sri Lanka Gamini Munasinghe who hoisted the National flag of Sri Lanka amidst the flags of the fourteen participating schools, to the accompaniment of the National anthem.

Former England Test star Denis Amiss who is presently an England Test selector was one of the distinguished guests to attend the festival.

In this seven-a-side, six overs knock out tournament, Jaffna Central beat St. Anthonys and took on Jaffna Hindu College in one of the semi finals. In the other semi final Royal College conceded defeat to Nalanda and the final encounter was Jaffna Central College versus Nalanda College. Nalanda won the toss and put Central to bat who scored 76 runs for the loss of 4 wickets. Nalanda lost all their wickets for 66 runs and Jaffna Central emerged champions for the fourth year in a row.

Jaffna Central College team was comprised of, A. Maheethan (captain), V.P. Prahalathan, B. Muraleetharan, T.G. Singham, M. Dharmaraj, K. Kalavannan, S. Wijeyanathan, T. Raviraj, and S. Sivathas.

Over 3000 Sri Lankan expatriates graced this unique Sri Lankan annual festival to swell the funds urgently needed to aid the Children Cancer ward at the Cancer Research Institute at Maharagama and also to raise funds for the schools whose OBA's participated in this festival.

Dr. K.C. Rajasingham.

Tamil Lawyers in U.K. Form Association

Tamil lawyers practising in the United Kingdom have formed themselves into an Association at a meeting held recently at the Little Hall, Revelstoke Road, London SW18. Tamil lawyers from various parts of the U.K. attended the meeting at which the following office bearers were elected for the current year 1993/94. **President:** *C. Sithamparapillai;* **Vice Presidents:** *Wimal Sockanathan & A. Sriharan;* **Secretary:** *M. Neminathan;* **Asst. Secretary:** *K. Sritharan;* **Treasurer:** *P. Rajanayagam;* **Asst. Treasurer:** *K. Mahesan;* **Executive Committee:** *R.D. Ratnasingham, K.P.S. Chetty, N. Sivaganeshan, S. Paramalingam. T. Yogananthar.* **Committee of Appeal:** *S. Yogarajah, K. Markandoo, P. Arulampalam.*

Continued from page 25

6. 'Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies: that I might destroy them that hate me' (Psalm 18:40).

Don't these passages espouse the concept of 'bad people' (*kettavarkal)*? Sang the Hindu saint Thirunavukkarasu in the 7th century, *'Naam yaarkum kudi allom – Namanai anjom – narahaththil idarpadom. . .'*.These sentiments are the same as those expressed in the above-cited Bible verses. And I do not see anything wrong in subscribing to these themes in the 20th century.

Even Subrahmanya Bharathi advised the children in his *Paappaa Paatu* as follows:

'Paathakam seipavarai kandaal
payam kollalahathu paappaa
Mothi mithithu vidu paappaa – Avar
muhathil umizhnthu vidu paappaa'

Was Bharathi's suggestion to kids, of stomping and spitting on the faces of 'bad people', an ill-advised one? I don't think so. He had just adopted the passages mentioned in the Bible. Only those who are subservient and lacking a backbone do like to dance to a different tune, extolling the virtues of 'peaceful co-existence' while being oppressed in covert and overt ways.

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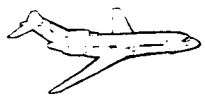

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